Davide asks NBI to investigate four Baguio judges

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INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MALAKI ANG MAITUTULONG N'YO

Wanted: Epilepsy role model

By Blanche S. Rivera

WANTED: government official or showbiz personality to serve as model for epilepsy.

The volunteer

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Cabinet approves Balikatan rules

Finally, a US envoy in RP

THE US Senate on Monday confirmed career foreign service officer Francis Ricciardone Jr. as ambassador to the Philippines, where he is expected to press for the release of two Americans held hostage by the Abu Sayyaf.

Sen. Sam Brownback, a Kansas Republican and member of the Senate foreign relations committee, said Ricciardone would be a "strong advocate" in seeking the release of Martin and Gracia Burnham, a Kansas missionary couple abducted on May 27 from a Palawan resort and since held in the island of Basilan.

"I am pleased that the Senate confirmed Frank Ricciardone to be US ambassador to the Philippines today," Brownback said in Washington. "Now the Burnhams will have a strong advocate, officially installed in the Philippines, working on their behalf to free them."

ABS-CBN network yesterday reported that the Abu Sayyaf was insisting on a ransom of $2 million for the Burnhams.

The bandits spoke of their ransom demand in letters written in January by their spokesperson Abu Sabaya to his brother, copies of which were obtained by the network.

RICCIARDONE: Up against hostage crisis, US troops issue.

ABS-CBN said the letters were written in the local Tausug and Yakan.

"The Abu Sayyaf will not release their captives Martin and Gracia Burnham unless ransom is paid for their freedom," it said.

Asked for comment, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said: "There is no way we can even talk about it. Lines are open insofar as the unconditional surrender (of the bandits) and the unconditional return of the hostages are concerned. I would like to make that very clear."

Basilan officials recently said they had heard of the ransom demand but that the Abu Sayyaf appeared to be willing to settle for $1 million.

In addition to the hostage situation, Ricciardone will be confronted by the controversial deployment of US troops in the Philippines under the RP-US Balikatan 02-1.

Filipino demonstrators argue that the presence of American forces violates the Philippine Constitution, which bars foreign troops from operating in the country.

US officials have said 660 US

FINALLY/A16

GMA bags $1.2B in investments

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday brought home $1.2 billion in foreign investment commitments following a successful nine-day visit to Britain, Canada and the United States.

"I traveled with a congressional and business delegation and they can attest that people have confidence in the Philippines," Ms Macapagal told a news conference at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

"And the world would be more upbeat about us if we stopped tearing our nation apart by petty political squabbles," she added.

Ms Macapagal, who addressed the World Economic Forum in New York last week, said she briefed world business and political leaders on investment opportunities in the Philippines under her year-old administration.

"I told my audiences that we are cleaning up our democratic processes and procedures, hardening the chain of responsibility and governance and enabling professionalism from the Cabinet down to the local governments," the President said.

"Things are also looking up on the business side . . . We pinned down $1.2 billion worth of investments," she added.

The biggest investment will

GMA/A17

Do's, don'ts of war games not yet available

By Carlito Pablo

THE CABINET oversight committee approved last night the terms of reference (TOR) for the RP-US Balikatan 02-1.

The document defines the role to be played in the Balikatan by some 660 US military personnel, of whom 160 Green Berets will be joining local troops to hunt down the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

No details were available on the contents of the document itself.

Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo, said Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. would sign the document for the Philippines and US State Secretary Colin Powell for the United States "in a few days."

Earlier, there was confusion regarding who would sign the TOR. Guingona told reporters that he and Powell would sign it "as soon as possible." But Tiglao said the President might sign the document if only to emphasize "the fact that she's responsible" for the war games that had drawn vehement opposition from various sectors.

Guingona had earlier raised reservations about the constitu-

CABINET/A16

EDWIN BACASMAS

THE PRESIDENT at the Centennial Airport after arriving on Tuesday from an 8-day trip to Britain, Canada and the United States. Welcoming her home is eldest son, Pampanga Vice Governor Mikey Arroyo.

DENNIS SABANGAN

ATTENTION-GRABBING US soldier jogs inside the AFP Southcom compound in Zamboanga City.

John O accuses Camacho of conspiracy

By Clarissa Batiño and Cynthia D. Balana

REPORTS that Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had resigned circulated yesterday as the chair of the Senate committee on finance continued to accuse him of conspiring with his sister to come up with a government transaction that gave a non-government organization a windfall profit of P1.4 billion.

Sen. John Osmeña said Camacho was involved in "cooking up" the bidding of P35 billion in Peace bonds contrary to the finance secretary's claims that he had inhibited himself from the transaction because of *delicadeza*.

Osmeña said Camacho might be liable for graft.

"If this is conspiracy, the crime of one is the crime of all. And I don't care how noble the cause is of CODE-NGO because the end does not justify the means," he said.

In the bidding, the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) used RCBC to "frontload" the money needed to purchase the Peace bonds. For winning the bid, CODE-NGO earned P1.8 billion and paid its financial advisers and RCBC at least P400 million in fees.

CODE-NGO set up an endowment of P1.3 billion but kept for itself a commission of P140 million. The group said it merely wanted to raise money to support an endowment fund that would finance a poverty alleviation program.

Finance Undersecretary Antonio Bernardo said Camacho had not resigned and was not inclined to.

"I don't think he would give up simply because of the controversies being raised

JOHN/A16

What are zero coupon bonds?

By Elena R. Torrijos

WHAT are zero-coupon bonds and how does one make money from them?

Understanding this is a key to understanding whether the government's auction of P35 billion worth of zero-coupon bonds last October was irregular and gave a non-profit organization chaired by the sister of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho an advantage over other bidders for the bonds.

Bonds are contracts wherein the issuer, a company or the government, promises to repay money borrowed at a certain date and to pay interest at regular intervals.

However, in the case of zero-coupon bonds, these bonds pay no interest but are then issued at deep discount from the "face value," the amount to be paid back upon the bonds' maturity.

If the government borrowed P35 billion by issuing regular bonds worth that amount, it would receive P35 billion but would have

WHAT/A16

'Committee did not give a damn about complaint'

By Juliet Javellana

WITH MINORITY Leader Carlos Padilla leading the attack, the House of Representatives yesterday resumed the plenary debate on the committee report dismissing the first impeachment complaint against Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, even as the Supreme Court junked Iloilo Rep. Augusto Syjuco's motion to declare certain portions of the new rules on impeachment unconstitutional.

Padilla accused the justice committee, which had prepared the report, of violating the House rules of impeachment when it found the complaint "insufficient in substance" without

COMMITTEE/A17

TAX CREDIT SCAM

Court revives 62 dismissed graft cases

By Volt Contreras

THE SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday reversed an August 2001 ruling and revived 62 graft cases against former Finance Undersecretary Antonio Belicena, Petron Corp. executives and other individuals implicated in the tax credit scam.

The court's Special Fourth Division granted a motion for reconsideration filed by the Office of the Ombudsman, ceding impeachment-dogged Ombudsman Aniano Desierto a tactical victory.

But at the same time, four of the five judges castigated Desierto's office for causing a delay in the progress of the cases that "should not be countenanced."

The reversal, written by Associate Justice Nicodemo Ferrer, scheduled the arraignment and pre-trial of all 62 cases for Feb. 25 and 26.

The 62 are the same cases that Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno mentioned in his privilege speech of Jan. 23 when he accused Desierto of fatally undermining the government's prosecution of the perpetrators of the tax credit scam.

In a six-page resolution promulgated on Feb. 4, Ferrer said "prevailing circumstances at this stage do not justify the supreme sanction of dismissal of the cases at bench."

COURT/A17

Second FRONT PAGE

NAKU, IMBESTI-GAHAN YAN!

NBI asked to quiz Baguio judges

By Vincent Cabreza and Jovelyn Reyes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has asked the National Bureau of Investigation to question four Baguio judges regarding allegations of court irregularities disclosed by another judge last week.

The probe also covers the whistleblower, Judge Ruben Ayson, of the regional trial court here.

The NBI's Cordillera director, Rickson Chiong, began preliminary interviews on Monday, beginning with Ayson, who has been told to refrain from making any more statements by the high court.

The gag order also covered the judges that Ayson accused of petty graft and ethical violations: Executive Judge Antonio Reyes, and Judges Clarence Villanueva, Amado Caguioa and Edilberto Claravall.

The order covers every aspect of Ayson's Jan. 25 executive order which contained a litany of alleged violations involving court collection practices, a supposed adulterous affair and instances of gambling involving unnamed judges.

In an earlier interview, Caguioa said Ayson's executive order might have been ignited by the intense rivalry among Ayson, Reyes and Villanueva, all of whom applied for a post in the Court of Appeals.

But sources at the Justice Hall here yesterday said the issue may well go beyond that as the NBI had requested the opening of court logs on illegal drugs cases handled by the five judges.

All five judges, including Ayson, have been handling cases involving illegal drugs for the past five years.

Ayson is also conducting the trial of two Chinese implicated in a kidnap-for-ransom case and another high-profile narcotics case.

DAVIDE

"There is pressure from some prosecutors here for the NBI to dig up old records on narcotics cases that were hastily dismissed. They have been lobbying for an investigation for sometime now, and I do not know if this (NBI) probe is meant to comply with their (prosecutor's) request," the source said in Filipino.

Reyes himself was at the center of a minor controversy last year for allowing two Mindanao-based illegal drug suspects to post bail.

But Reyes also issued an order on Aug. 27 last year, which suggested an "empirical pattern" of mishandled narcotics evidence on the part of the arresting agents and the prosecution.

The Reyes order said gaps in the evidence used to prosecute many drug suspects in Baguio might have been overlooked intentionally to favor the suspects.

The Reyes order involved a drug case filed by the 14th Narcotics Regional Office against a suspect who was arrested in a drug bust in 2000.

The source said Ayson himself never brought up any complaint regarding his colleagues' handling of narcotics cases.

But the INQUIRER also found one important factor shared in common by the four—Caguioa, Villanueva, Claravall and Reyes—judges: the cases arising from the Ilusorio family feud.

Ayson mentioned the Ilusorio cases in his Jan. 25 order, in which he accused Reyes of hogging most of the so-called "millionaires' cases."

"Some lawyers are saying that the selected cases are raffled to (Reyes) like the three Ilusorio cases, the Jadewell case, the Henry Lao case, (and) the Munsayac case," Ayson wrote. The cases involved some of Baguio's richest families.

"I understand (estranged Ilusorio heir) Ramon Ilusorio filed a complaint against Judge Reyes in connection with the Ilusorio cases. Also, one of the Munsayacs filed a complaint against Judge Reyes in connection with the Munsayac case," Ayson's order said.

The INQUIRER found 10 pending Ilusorio court cases, distributed evenly among Reyes, Claravall, Villanueva and Caguioa, and Judges Abraham Borreta and Antonio Esteves.

Claravall and Villanueva have been handling the dispute over the estate of the late Ilusorio patriarch, Potenciano Ilusorio.

Ayson issued the Jan. 25 order to inhibit himself from an ongoing civil case against Mayor Bernardo Vergara, over a demolition order the mayor had issued against a property whose ownership is still under legal dispute.

But the order strayed into the personal when Ayson, who is apparently feuding with Reyes, enumerated instances of alleged misdemeanors committed or tolerated by Reyes and the other three judges.

The Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption has thrown its support behind Ayson whose disclosure of "layers of corruption" behind the court chambers of Baguio the VACC said were " not hard to believe."

"Judicial corruption is an ugly reality which infests not only the Baguio City Justice Hall but also the municipal and regional trial courts all over the country," said VACC chair and president Dante Jimenez.

The VACC urged the Supreme Court to look into the allegations of corruption not only in Baguio but in other courts.

It said the SC should also examine, evaluate and take action on reports of irregularities in all courts, including the high tribunal itself.

The VACC said it would form a "people's court" to evaluate the performance of the country's judges and justices.

"Expect dangerous repercussions when the masses perceive that the justice system is corrupt," Jimenez said. "The poor can endure poverty but not injustice." ***With a report from Jerome Aning***

2nd perjury case vs Erap

By Volt Contreras

THE SPECIAL court hearing the Estrada cases at the Sandiganbayan yesterday ruled that a prima facie case exists in the second perjury charge filed against the deposed president.

Already in jail on plunder charges, Estrada was served another warrant of arrest, this time for allegedly falsifying his statement of assets and liabilities for 1998.

Filed Oct. 17 last year by the Office of the Ombudsman, the case was initiated by the Volunteers Against Graft and Corruption.

The case was first raffled off to the Sandiganbayan's Third Division, were it stayed for about three months, before it was turned over to the special division created by the Supreme Court last month.

The charge accuses Estrada of under-declaring his net worth at only P37.39 million in his 1998 SAL, in which he claimed to have only P5 million cash in hand and in the bank.

He also claimed to have stakes in just three companies, namely Jelp Real Estate and Development, JE Inc., and Feluisa Development.

State prosecutors, however, allege that he then had up to P57.11 million in three banks, and that his business interest include the three companies plus these:

First LPL Land Syndication Inc., Asis-Ejercito Garments Inc., 24K Food Inc., Alta Food Inc., Prime Entertainment for Television Production Inc., ADE Food Inc., Electronic Sentry System Inc., All Hot Soup Inc., and FELT Food Services.

HABEAS CORPUS WRIT REJECTED

Nur arrest legal—SC

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE SUPREME Court yesterday junked detained Moro leader Nur Misuari's petition to be released from police custody for lack of merit.

The SC also denied Misuari's motion asking for oral arguments on his petition, which was filed on Jan. 10.

Misuari and his spiritual adviser Ustaj Abu Haris Osman have been detained inside the Philippine National Police's Special Action Forces training camp at Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, since being brought from Malaysia to stand trial for rebellion.

The other accused—Bakil Annay Harun, Juhan Sawadjaan San Sanzibar, Akil Abduraham Abdul, Uddin Esguerra Ishmael, Gamar Bin Razak, Omar bin Abdullah—are being detained at the Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig.

Their separate petition for habeas corpus, filed on Jan. 14, was also denied by the high court.

In junking the petitions, the SC said the petitioners "failed to show any prima facie or patent illegality in their detention that will warrant the issuance of the writ of habeas corpus."

The high court explained that habeas corpus was "a prerogative writ directed to a person detaining another, commanding the former to produce the body of the latter at a designated time and place."

The SC said the writ could be issued only if Misuari could prove that his detention was patently illegal or improper.

MISUARI

"It means not merely to correct 'an error'... in holding the petitioner in custody, but whether such error is sufficient to render void the judgment, order, or process...'" which caused his detention.

The SC said Misuari could not dispute that there was a pending rebellion case against him and his aides; the order of arrest issued by the trial court had been implemented; and the venue of the rebellion case had been transferred to Branch 36 of the regional trial court of Calamba, Laguna.

The high court did not consider as relevant to the issue of the legality of detention the petitioners' contention of "alleged trickery and deception surrounding their 'abduction' from Malaysia by Philippine authorities, the supposed subhuman conditions in the detention cells of the Misuari aides and the alleged absence of pertinent records of their case at the Department of Justice in Manila."

"There are other available and proper remedies in the proper courts for these gripes," the SC said.

Misuari and his aides could not also invoke the equal protection of the laws in their case, the court said.

"(It) is not warranted because the other alleged participants in the Nov. 19, 2001 rebellious attack have not been shown to have been exempted from prosecution.

"Furthermore, the absence of a preliminary investigation, if true, will not cause the issuance of the writ since there are other adequate and available remedies to address this problem in the proper courts," the SC said.

It said the petitions were procedurally defective "because they do not contain certifications against forum-shopping, a lapse that by itself is sufficient cause for dismissal."

Misuari and seven of his top officials are facing rebellion charges for the armed attacks in Jolo, Sulu, on Nov. 19.

The Ombudsman's office is investigating a separate administrative case against Misuari.

Police Director Lucas Managuelod, chief of the PNP-Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management, asked Desierto to sanction Misuari for allegedly committing rebellious acts against the government, considered as an offense of grave misconduct.

Managuelod alleged that Misuari's armed supporters surrounded the town of Jolo "with an evil intent of overthrowing the legitimate government and authorities."

PARTY-LIST WINNER

Evangelist's son is youngest solon

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE SON of a religious leader whose group was earlier disqualified from party list certification by the Commission on Elections will from today sit as the youngest member of the House of Representatives.

Emmanuel Joel Villanueva, 26, who represents the Citizens Battle against Corruption (Cibac), officially becomes a member of the 12th Congress after months of legal wrangling.

In accordance with a Supreme Court decision released last week, the Comelec yesterday proclaimed as winners the Cibac and the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives (Apec) as legitimate party list groups entitled to one seat each in the House of Representatives.

The Apec and Cibac are only the fourth and fifth party list groups to be proclaimed winners in the May 2001 elections by the Comelec. The others are Bayan Muna, Akbayan and Butil, whose nominees assumed their posts last year.

"We have waited so long," the young Villanueva said in an interview at the Comelec yesterday.

"The delay has done irreparable damage, and it happened all because I am the son of Eddie Villanueva," he said.

Villanueva's father, Bro. Eddie Villanueva, leads the Jesus is Lord Church, which has a membership of more than 1 million. The Comelec disqualified Cibac on the basis of its religious affiliation.

Villanueva, born in August 1975, is seven months younger than Camarines Sur Rep. Felix William Fuentebella, till now the youngest legislator in the House.

The younger Villanueva was national chair of the Kristiyanong Kabataan para sa Bayan for two years. He graduated with an accounting degree from the University of Sto. Tomas and went on to take masteral studies at Harvard University in the United States.

He said he would immediately review the laws governing the party list voting so others would not go through the same delays and controversies in the future.

Apec Rep. Ernesto Pablo, 49, is a certified public accountant working for the Quezon Electric Cooperative. His group's main concern is the electrification of some 7,800 of the country's barangays, which have no access to electricity.

The Apec was earlier disqualified because the Comelec said it did not represent a marginalized sector.

The Supreme Court, in a decision handed down on Jan. 29, reversed the Comelec ruling and ordered the constitutional body to proclaim the two party list groups as winners in the May polls.

The high court's decision was yesterday assailed by the CPAG, which calls itself a coalition of 46 marginalized party list groups.

CPAG chair Vic del Fierro Jr. denounced the decision as contrary to the intention and mandate of the Party List Law.

"How could Apec represent the interest of the marginalized sectors when it is composed of the owner so electric cooperatives who are multimillionaires?" he said in a statement.

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SC slaps new penalty on Demetria

By Michael L. Ubac

THE SUPREME Court has again slapped dismissed Court of Appeals Associate Justice Demetrio Demetria with a fine for gross misconduct, this time for preventing the enforcement of a court's decision in an ejectment case in 1998.

In a full court resolution, the high court imposed a P20,000 fine on Demetria for the improprieties he committed in connection with an ejectment case filed by the heirs of the late Justice Jose Reyes against Metro Manila Builders Inc.

"We find it apt to stress... that it is the duty of the members of the bench to avoid any impression of impropriety to protect the image and integrity of the judiciary. Judges must not only render just, correct and impartial decisions, but must do so in a manner free of any suspicion as to their fairness, impartiality and integrity," said the high court.

Demetria, a member of the CA Special Third Division, was dismissed on March 27, 2001 for interfering in a case involving drug queen Yu Yuk Lai.

The tribunal found Demetria liable for violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct for asking state prosecutors to go slow on Yu.

Yu and her nephew, Kenneth Moncada, were sentenced to life imprisonment on Sept. 25, 2001 for selling three kilos of shabu in 1998.

The court forfeited all the retirement benefits of Demetria and barred him from reentering the government service for not only making a "mockery of his judicial office, but also (caused) incalculable damage to the entire judiciary."

On Dec. 9, the decision became final and executory after the high court denied his appeal.

Manila Judge Manuel Muro, who previously handled the Yu case, was also dismissed for his bias toward the drug queen.

Based on a 22-page resolution written by Associate Justice Bernardo Pardo, the heirs of Reyes filed an ejectment case against Manila Builders after the latter allegedly violated the terms and conditions of a lease contract involving a one-hectare land on Taft Avenue, Pasay City.

The land had been leased to Manila Builders for 25 years. From an initial P15,000 rent every month, it was raised to P30,000 later.

On Feb. 3, 1997, Reyes heirs' filed with the Pasay Metropolitan Trial Court a complaint for unlawful detainer based on a breach contract of lease, which the trial court decided on May 9, 1997 in complainants' favor.

The trial court had ordered the eviction of Manila Builders from the premises. The latter appealed the decision with the Pasay Regional Trial Court, which was subsequently dismissed.

When Manila Builders elevated the case to the CA, the appellate court issued an order restraining the execution of the ejectment judgment on Dec. 8, 1997.

On March 23, 1998, Manila Builders filed with the CA a petition for certiorari and mandamus questioning the regional trial court's denial of its application for injunctive relief.

On the same day, the appellate court issued a resolution restraining the enforcement of a writ of execution issued by the Pasay MTC. Demetria wrote the resolution, which was concurred in by CA Associate Justice Ramon Barcelona. The other member of the CA Special Third Division, Associate Justice Omar Amin, did not sign it.

On Aug. 21, 1998, the CA nullified the rulings of the Pasay RTC and ordered the Reyes heirs' "to restore the subject property in the possession of the petitioner."

The Reyes heirs were left with no other recourse but to elevate the case to the Supreme Court on Sept. 14 of the same year. But despite the pending petition with the SC, the CA issued a resolution granting the motion for execution of CA's Aug. 21 ruling filed by Manila Builders.

The CA, through Demetria, also directed the appointment of a special sheriff to execute the decision. The Reyes heirs were evicted on the same day by Efren Rivamonte, who was appointed special sheriff.

This prompted the Reyes' heirs to file an administrative complaint for violation of the Code of Judicial Conduct against Demetria and other members of the special Third Division, among others.

The SC did not question the authority of the CA to issue injunction orders in cases falling under its jurisdiction. "What is questionable is the irregular procedure by which the March 23, 1998 resolution was arrived at and served on the parties," the SC said.

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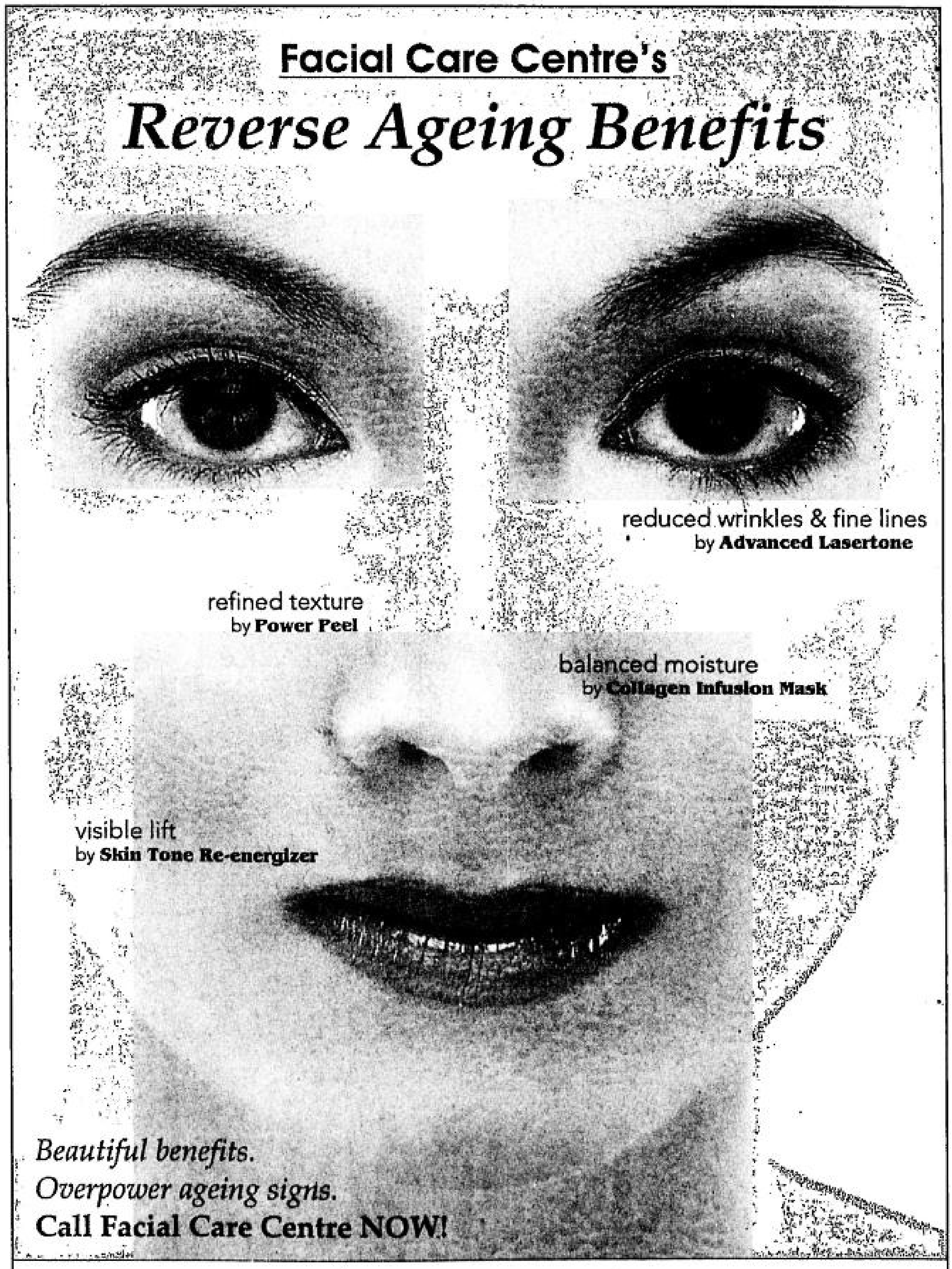
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Finance usec named new customs chief

By Blanche S. Rivera

MALACAÑANG yesterday announced the appointment of a new Customs Commissioner but neglected to inform the incumbent of its decision.

Customs Commissioner Titus Villanueva had no inkling he would be giving up his office soon.

Villanueva only learned he would be replaced when the INQUIRER sought his comment on the Malacañang announcement that Finance Undersecretary Antonio Bernardo would take over the customs bureau on March 30.

The choice of Villanueva's successor was announced on the eve of the centennial anniversary of the Bureau of Customs.

Villanueva, who is due to retire on March 30, will end decades of service at the bureau where he rose from the ranks to become its chief.

Villanueva said he had not received any official notice from Malacañang or the finance department regarding Bernardo's appointment.

The Customs chief said he saw "no reason" why he should be replaced as the collections and revenues of the bureau had been much improved during his watch.

But he recognized that by law he should have been retired in September 2001 when he turned 66.

He said he would willingly vacate the post when he receives the official notice from Malacañang.

He shrugged off speculation that this could have been caused by reports of seized perishable goods wasting away in warehouses, saying it was not the bureau's fault.

He said the BoC was merely adhering to court orders and could not go against judicial bodies which are prone to issuing restraining orders on the disposal of seized goods.

He said the BoC had exceeded its collection target by P1.1 billion during the third quarter of last year. It posted revenues totaling P78.5 billion, almost enough to cover the national government's budget deficit of P79.559 billion during the same period.

Villanueva said he had performed well during his one-year stint as customs chief. He was appointed on Jan. 22, 2001. "I have good relations with the DoF and Malacañang," Villanueva said when asked if he had had any brushes with Palace officials.

"I can't say yet how I feel; I'll have to check first if this is true," he said.

He said he had met with finance officials last week to discuss smuggling, and he had not been informed of any plan to replace him at the BoC nor had he heard of any rumors or speculations about any impending change in the BoC leadership.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao, who announced Bernardo's appointment, said both Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and the President had "full trust in his capability."

The 47-year-old mathematician and lawyer, who is known in business circles as the right-hand man of Camacho, has been undersecretary and chief of staff at the finance department since June 2001.

Camacho had taken him into the energy department when the former was energy secretary.

The customs bureau is an agency under the finance department and its commissioner carries the rank of undersecretary. ***With a report from Carlito Pablo***

LIBERAL CAUCUS JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Liberal Party congressmen gather around their leader, Florencio "Butch" Abad (third from left), during a caucus on which they issued a resolution expressing support for a former colleague, Transportation and Communication Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, who needs all the support he can get from House members of the Commission on Appointments for his confirmation.

Ban on incinerators not absolute, SC rules

By Michael Lim Ubac

IN A SURPRISE ruling, the Supreme Court has declared that the ban on incineration as mandated by the Clean Air Act was not absolute.

The landmark decision was contained in a 21-page decision of the SC Third Division, which upheld the award of a $350-million Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) incineration project to Jancom Environmental Corp. during the Ramos administration.

The decision, which was promulgated on Jan. 30, was written by Associate Justice Jose A.R. Melo and concurred in by Associate Justices Jose Vitug, Artemio Panganiban, Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez.

Associate Justice Antonio Carpio inhibited, saying he was a former counsel to a foreign partner of Jancom.

In upholding the incineration contract, the SC agreed with the ruling of the Court of Appeals on Nov. 13, 2001 that Section 20 of Republic Act 8749 (Clean Air Act) did not impose a total ban on incineration.

The law says that incineration is defined as the burning of municipal, biochemical and hazardous wastes, which process emits poisonous and toxic fumes.

"Section 20 does not absolutely prohibit incineration as a mode of waste disposal; rather only those burning processes which emit poisonous and toxic fumes are banned," the SC said, quoting the CA ruling.

The SC then dismissed MMDA's petition for certiorari and upheld the CA ruling awarding the project to Jancom.

Multimillion contract

The case stemmed from a $350-million contract awarded to Jancom by the Presidential Task Force on Waste Management to build an incinerator at the San Mateo Sanitary Landfill in Rizal.

The project was part of the government's long-term solution to Metro Manila's garbage problem. It could process half of the estimated 6,000 tons of garbage generated by the metropolis every day .

The proposed tipping fee was $59 per metric ton.

However, former President Fidel Ramos did not sign the contract because of objections from the Investment Coordinating Committee.

Also, the Estrada administration did not honor the deal with the passage of the Clean Air Act in 1999, which bans the use of incinerators to dispose off garbage.

Ban

In a resolution in October 1999, the Greater Metropolitan Manila Solid Waste Management Committee (GMMWMC) informed Jancom officials that it was disregarding Jancom's contract due to a change in government policy outlawing the incineration process.

It then called for a new bidding.

So in June 2000, the MMDA and the committee solicited international tenders for a sanitary landfill. The Pro-Environment Consortium won the bidding.

This forced Jancom to seek a judicial relief from the Pasig City RTC.

On March 14, 2000, Jancom sued the MMDA by filing a petition for certiorari and prohibition. The court sided with Jancom and declared as illegal and void the GMMSWMC resolution.

When the case reached the CA, the appellate court ruled that the contract was valid, and dismissed MMDA's special civic action for certiorari.

Left with no other recourse, the MMDA elevated the case to the SC.

In its decision, the SC said the MMDA should have immediately appealed the trial court's ruling, not with the CA, but with the same court.

"However, instead of appealing the decision, MMDA resorted to the extraordinary remedy of certiorari, as a mode of obtaining reversal of the judgment.

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SMC-Kirin deal wrapped up in a week

By Carlito Pablo

TRADE Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas III yesterday said an agreement on the $540-million buy-in into San Miguel Corp. by Japanese brewer Kirin would be "wrapped up" in a week's time.

Roxas said the negotiations between the government review committee, which he heads, and the group of SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., have done with three major issues concerning the deal.

"We probably need one more week. We're now just going over the wording of the agreement," Roxas said in an interview.

Roxas said the two sides have agreed that the Presidential Commission on Good Government would have five SMC board seats to represent the interest of the coconut farmers.

With the one seat each held by the state-run pension funds, the Government Service Insurance System and the Social Security System, the government will have a total of seven board seats.

A second point of agreement was that "there will be no dropping of cases" against Cojuangco, Roxas said.

Thirdly, the government will be represented in all major committees and subsidiaries of the SMC.

Fears had been raised that the entry into SMC of Kirin, which is seeking to buy 15 percent of the food-and-beverage giant, would dilute the value of the government's SMC holdings.

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Gloria's next stop is Asia

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will travel next within Asia.

Ms Macapagal yesterday announced she will pay state visits to Thailand and South Korea in March and May, respectively.

She said she would also return to Japan, which she visited last September.

The President returned at dawn yesterday from a nine-day visit to the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States.

In an interview with dzBB, the President said she would visit Thailand during the Holy Week, which falls this year on March 25-31.

She will visit South Korea and Japan in May.

Troubled Northwest jet returns

A NORTHWEST Airlines jumbo jet turned back to Manila on yesterday after suffering engine problems on its way to Nagoya, Japan, airport officials said.

The Boeing 747 was carrying 374 passengers and 13 crew.

It took off from Manila at 6:30 a.m. and had been airborne for one and a half hours when it radioed the Manila airport control tower that it was heading back because something was wrong with one its engines, Air Transportation Office chief Adelberto Yap said.

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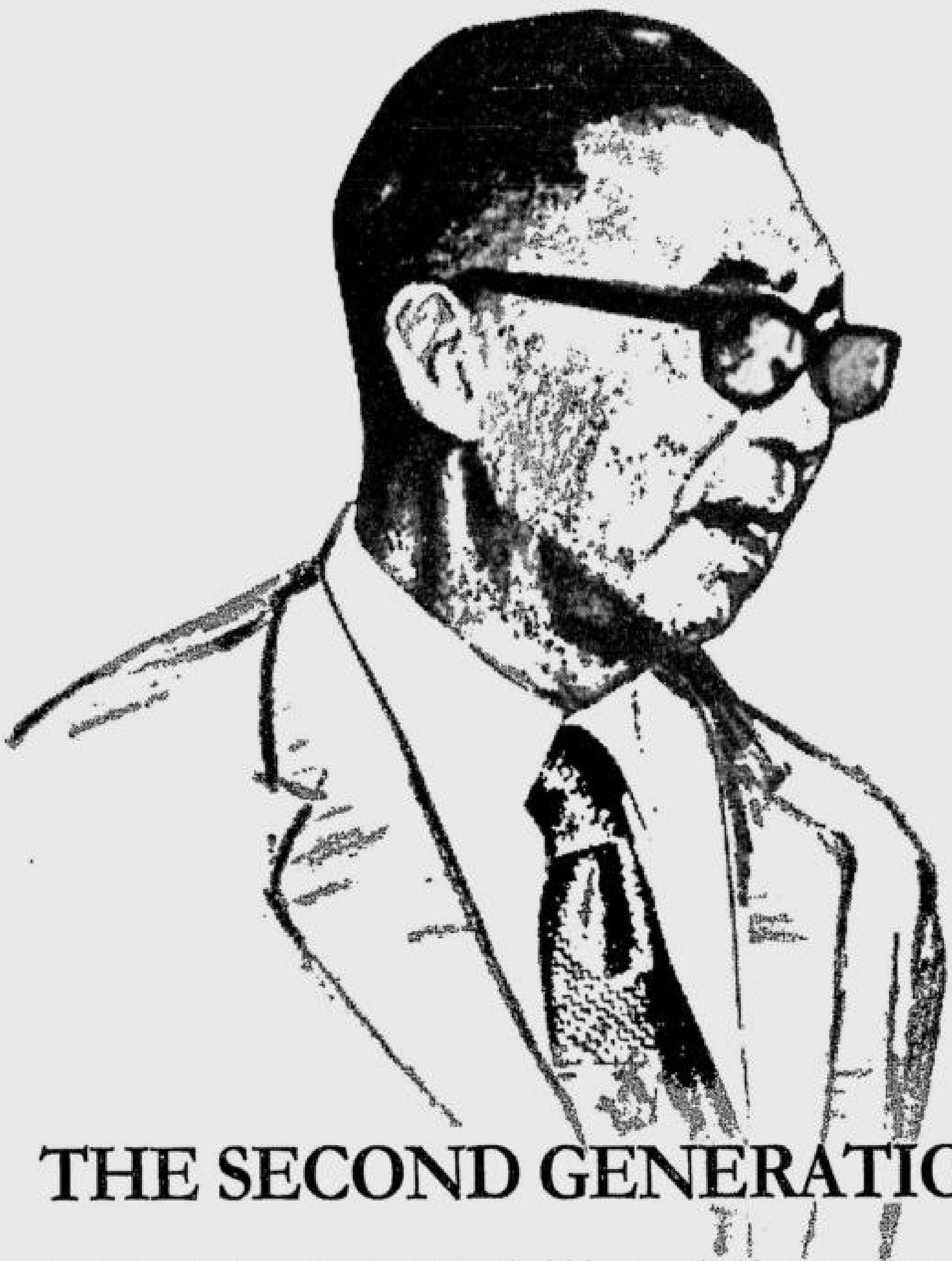

THE FOUNDER

Starting out as a clerk in Edward J. Nell, Jose Concepcion, Sr. rose from the ranks and became its President in 1958 - the first Filipino to head a large foreign-owned enterprise in the Philippines.

At 60, when many would rather retire, Concepcion Sr. went on to pioneer his vision of Philippine entrepreneurship and industrialization. Together with his spouse and business partner, Herminia, he started a company that was to become the hallmark of Filipino capability - Concepcion Industries, Inc.

The elder Concepcion anchored the business on values he honored and lived by: hardwork, a culture of integrity, conservatism and transparency, and dedication to family. Today, these same values are the guiding principles of his children - **Jose Jr.**, **Raul**, **Mely C. Hechanova** , former Executive Vice-President and Comptroller, and **Reynaldo** , former President - and his grandchildren.

THE SECOND GENERATION FULFILLS THE LEGACY

Raul T. Concepcion has blended his own business acumen with his father's time-tested values. Focus on core business. Minimal borrowings. The ability to think and look macro without losing sight of on-the-ground realities. A fierce faith in Philippine business and the Filipino consumer.

Under his stewardship, the Concepcion Group, nurtured by the Founder's vision, became one of the country's biggest manufacturing enterprises and the most profitable consumer durable manufacturing group.

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- Contel, the telecommunications arm of CII which has made its mark as pioneer and leader in trunked radio communications and which will be expanding its services to be a leader in information communication and technology.
- ALI-CII Development Corp., a joint venture shopping mall at Edsa-Taft between Ayala Land, Inc. and Concepcion Industries, Inc.

THE LEGACY LIVES

Upon his retirement as Chief Operating Officer of the CII Group of Companies, Raul T. Concepcion will focus his time and greater energy in strengthening business and government advocacy, a role he has played actively through five administrations.

In addition, he will expand his role on consumer advocacy to also cover power, water and shipping rates, port charges and transport fares. At the same time, under his guidance, the third generation Concepcions - **Raul Joseph Concepcion, Renna Hechanova Angeles** and **Raul Anthony Concepcion** - will venture in new frontiers in the fields of e-commerce, franchising, outsourcing, and high-value agricultural and fishery products.

They will ensure that the legacy lives.

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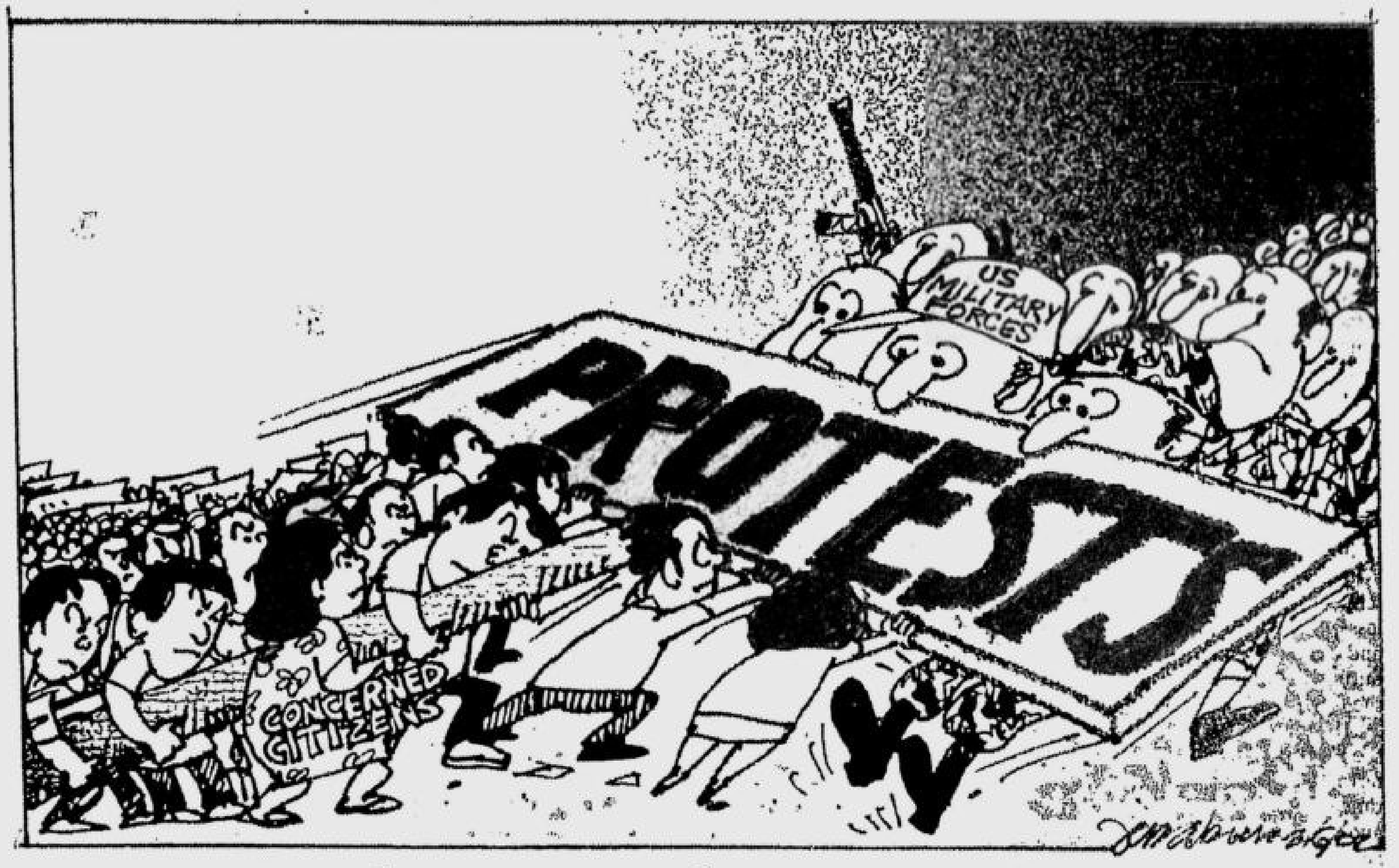


Judges in the dock

EDITORIAL

JUDGE Ruben Ayson may have such a consuming ambition to be appointed justice of the Court of Appeals that he would destroy anyone who stands in the way. Or he may have other personal reasons for doing what he did. But unless it can be shown that he has really gone off his rocker, the very serious charges he has leveled against his fellow judges in the regional trial court of Baguio should not be dismissed out of hand.

In a very unusual move, Ayson used an order inhibiting himself from an eviction case to launch a scathing attack against his fellow magistrates. One judge he accused of immorality for siring a child out of wedlock. Another judge, he said, was guilty of small-time graft and corruption when he allowed the stenographer to collect "commissioner's fees" in *ex parte* cases, like petitions for name changes, despite a Supreme Court order prohibiting the collection of such fees and in some cases letting non-lawyers hear such cases, instead of the clerk of court. He accused Executive Judge Antonio Reyes of cornering cases involving rich litigants. And he claimed to have witnessed some of his fellow judges drinking and gambling. "It is time to clean up the judiciary of the corrupt and immoral," Ayson declared.

Judge Ruben Caguioa said he had no idea why Ayson, his *kumpadre*, came out with his charges. But he said Ayson could have been hurt by the constant ribbing he was getting after being bypassed in his previous bid for appointment to the Court of Appeals. Caguioa pointed out that like Ayson, Reyes and another judge, Clarence Villanueva, have also applied for a vacancy in the higher court, and this might have sparked some rivalry among them. In any case, Caguioa said, none of Ayson's charges was "solid" and most of them "can be answered pointblank."

Is Ayson just being a poor loser who cannot take a joke or just a very ambitious but frustrated individual who cannot abide competition, as Caguioa seems to suggest? Or is he a well-meaning but badly misinformed moral crusader?

Truly, Ayson's behavior was odd. Losing lawyers may do it with some regularity, but judges don't have the habit of denouncing their fellow judges for grave misconduct. Besides, Ayson took what is probably an unprecedented step when he put his charges in a court order, when he knew very well that the proper party to address his complaints to was the Supreme Court.

Why he did so, Ayson will probably have to explain to the Supreme Court. But for now this much is clear from his record: Ayson is not a bit touched in the head. In fact, he was only recently awarded as the Most Outstanding Regional Trial Court Judge in the country. Will a judge who has presumably performed his duties and responsibilities exceptionally well, quickly turn around to make reckless charges against his own colleagues?

The answer to that question we hope we will find out soon. Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has ordered an investigation of the charges made by Ayson in addition to asking the judges to refrain from talking about the case.

It's good he did, and very quickly at that. Ayson's allegations are far worse than the charges of interference, laziness, tardiness and lying that then Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena and Justice Anacleto Badoy hurled at each other. More than anything, it is corruption that will bring down the judiciary.

Now that he has come out in the open with his charges, Ayson should not look back or listen to the counsel of those who argue that to save the institution, one must cover up for the crimes of his colleagues. Catching crooks in the courts is no easy job, but he has an ally in the Supreme Court, which has been cracking down hard on erring judges and justices lately.

But if the much needed cleanup of the judiciary is to begin here, the help of many others will be needed. Lawyers, police officers and victims of crime have offered information to the media supporting Ayson's allegations. One police official has raised the specter of drug syndicates either buying or bullying their way out of long jail terms, if not death sentences. But the media can only prod the government to act, they cannot punish erring judges. Now, these people who claim to be in the know or to be in possession of damning evidence have the chance to help. They should seize it.

Cruelty to animals rampant in RP

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE PHILIPPINE Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals did not like a phrase in my Jan. 10 column that described the PSPCA as "next to useless" and sent me a letter to prove that it is not, in fact, next to useless. But first, let me give you a background of the PSPCA as it is so, well, inactive that people hardly notice it.

The PSPCA was created by a special law, Act 1285, in 1904 by the Philippine Commission during the American regime. The primary objective of the law was to "enforce the law against cruelty to animals and to do other acts that will alleviate the suffering of animals." Its first officers were mostly Americans.

Since then, the PSPCA acted as enforcer of laws to prevent cruelty to animals with police power to make arrests. In 1936, however, Commonwealth Act 148 amending Act 1285 was enacted, withdrawing the police power of the PSPCA supposedly to correct a serious defect of the law. The cruel treatment of animals was viewed as an offense against the state and therefore it is the government who is duty-bound to enforce it.

"Since then, the PSPCA became a toothless tiger," said the letter by PSPCA president Edgardo Aldaba, "but not 'next to useless' for we are engaged in other activities regarding promotion of welfare of animals which among others include the following:

"1. Operating and maintaining an animal clinic charging a minimal fee of P40.

"2. Providing shelter for abandoned canines, felines, lupines, avian and even amphibians for as long as its limited resources can sustain while looking for a prospective foster owner.

"3. Giving free anti-rabies vaccination in different barangays in Metro Manila.

"4. Giving lectures in different city schools of Manila for the proper care of animals in order to mould them to be responsible pet owners.

"5. Providing job training for graduating veterinary students of different veterinary schools in the country.

"6. Providing legal advice and counseling to owners of pets which became victims of man's cruelty to animals."

The letter said the PSPCA also assists in the criminal prosecution of these cruelty cases.

"I would also like to bring to your kind attention," Aldaba wrote, "to the fact that the PSPCA was given recognition by international organizations for its participation in the prevention of cruelty to animals."

Enclosed were photo copies of a certificate of recognition from the International Fund for Animal Welfare, and a certificate of appreciation from the Animal Protection Institute of America based in Sacramento, California. It was dated February 1984. Such a long time ago. Aren't there any far more recent activities?

The PSPCA has a special place in my memory. When I was a student living on Lepanto Street, behind the old Selecta building at the corner of C.M. Recto, the PSPCA was only a few steps away. I used to go there and look at the dogs and feel sorry for them and wished I and the PSPCA and the government could do more for them. But then, as it is today, not much is being done for them. On the contrary, things have gotten worse for the dogs.

The laws against irresponsible pet ownership and against cruelty to animals are not being enforced now as strictly as they were being enforced then. There are more stray dogs now in the streets of Manila and elsewhere in the Philippines. Dog-eaters are increasing. Dogs are stolen and shipped to Baguio trussed up and packed in cages. They are killed by bludgeoning them on the head or nape with a club, then butchered and cooked. Then they are eaten by drunks as *pulutan*.

People in Baguio and the mountain provinces like to eat dog meat because of the belief that it heats up the body against the cold. This is false. It is the liquor they drink, not the dog meat, that makes them hot. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the PSPCA and the national and local governments can set them aright?

Dog fighting is right now taking place in Metro Manila, participated in by prominent families. This is prohibited by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) besides being very cruel to the dogs, yet nobody has ever been arrested and prosecuted for dog fighting.

Horse fighting is also prohibited by AWA, yet it is held openly in Davao and other parts of Mindanao during town fiestas and other celebrations attended perhaps by the town mayor, congressman and other officials of the province and municipality. Horse fighting is also very cruel to the horses. But have you heard of anybody being arrested and prosecuted for horse fighting?

Cockfighting is also very cruel to the fighting cocks. A fight almost always ends in death. But it is allowed by law because there are so many *sabungeros*, many of them prominent and supposedly educated personalities. But it being legal does not make the practice any less cruel.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if the PSPCA and other animal welfare groups can educate our people so that someday, such cruel and barbaric acts like dog-, horse- and cockfighting will be stopped?

* * *

Comments are welcome at asiseeit@pacific.net.ph

Postscript to a non-debate

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'D been wanting to comment on this, but the topic got shoved in the wayside by the rush of more pressing events. That is President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's comment that better IQ than charisma, and Joseph Estrada's subsequent response that IQ you can acquire, charisma you are born with. I've seen some of the comments in the e-mail and found them interesting. My own take on this, however, is this:

Curiously, the political leadership of this country since free elections were restored has been a pretty stark choice between one **or** the other.

Cory Aquino was the charismatic type but was not exactly associated with smarts, street or academic. She was the original butt of jokes in that respect, though the jokes never reached the level of "Eraptions." Cory's charisma itself should dispel the notion it is a quality you are born with. She was by no means charismatic at the start. The one who was so was her husband, the political *wunderkind* who would have been president after Ferdinand Marcos if Marcos had not hijacked the elections.

Cory's charisma was largely contextual, an aura conferred on her by tragic circumstances. The death of her husband thrust her into the limelight, and her epic struggle for justice—which embodied the people's epic struggle for justice: *"Hindi ka nag-iisa"*—made her loom larger than life. But that is also why that charisma works only in that context. It doesn't work elsewhere, as was shown when she fought for the retention of the US bases.

Fidel V. Ramos began his presidency acknowledging he was not the charismatic type, and turning it into an advantage. The country, he suggested, had had too many larger-than-life leaders who brought it nowhere. Maybe it was time it had someone who was merely the equal of life, a dull, plodding, type, who could bring it somewhere. What he lacked in mass appeal, he made up for in the image of a hardworking president, one who woke up early and slept late, toiling away for the country. He might have pulled it off too if the harsh 1997 Asian financial crisis, coming on the tail end of his term, hadn't come to burst the bubble. And make the charge of pillage, which some would say later was bigger but done with more finesse than his successor, bite.

Erap of course was the quintessential charismatic leader who was also the quintessentially intellectually challenged one. The first was immortalized in scenes of the former president bending from the stage to shake the hands of an adoring horde, the second was immortalized in the Eraptions, which accompanied the text revolution in this country. To this day, the nature of his charisma remains something of a puzzle. As someone asked me, how could someone whose movies can only be recalled by the older folk and who no longer cuts a heroic figure—he looks more *kontrabida* than *bida*—grip the popular imagination? I suspect it has to do with his living out his movie roles in his political life, or doing a good acting job of it. There's precious little gap between reel and real life between movie stars in this country anyway. But the charisma is real. And remains potent, if latent, which cannot augur well for the future of this country.

Ms Macapagal is a Ramos clone. But with a twist. She may argue for the IQ, but she did not get ahead in politics with IQ, she did so with PR—wrong letters. Her first sortie into it, where she paraded her expertise in trade, got her one of the last rungs in the senatorial elections. Her next, where she metamorphosed via posters into Nora Aunor, got her the first slot. So far, her efforts to secure a second term are not being built on displays of IQ but on PR. She's even gone international there.

Clearly, if there's one fundamental lesson to be learned from all this, it is that neither IQ nor charisma does the trick. None of them is per se the critical factor in leading this country out of the wilderness. We've had both in abundance, and we've gotten no farther than we were during Marcos' time. Each president merely blaming the previous one for inheriting a country in a shambles. Cory blamed Marcos, Ramos blamed Cory (though subtly), Erap blamed Ramos, and now Ms Macapagal blames Erap. It can't be just the external factors—which are the other things our presidents like to blame. Other Southeast Asian countries have faced the same crises but have surmounted them. We're the only one that's been spiraling downward.

In this country, IQ and charisma have led only to one thing, which is corruption of debilitating proportions. Short or long, as a local saying goes, the procession ends up in church. Smart or charismatic, the leadership has ended up only in pillage. Marcos was the smartest of them, though a great deal of his vaunted IQ was manufactured, and he used his smarts only to pauperize the country. The two charismatic presidents succeeded only in raising a coterie of friends and relatives that bled the country dry, Cory with her Kamaganak Inc., as the late Louie Beltran so graphically put it, and Erap with his "midnight Cabinet." And that is being kind, presuming as it does they merely had the wool pulled over their eyes by their more IQ-ed hangers-on.

You don't need great IQ and great charm to push this country along. You need great character. In place of charisma, what you need is the ability to put yourself in the shoes—or feet since they are shoeless—of the poor, and not merely pass off a perfect simulation of it. In place of IQ, what you need is the ability to talk to the people, to give shape and direction to their dreams, and not merely give them the high of delusions. And you need character, someone who will fight heroically for all this, and not run at the first sign of trouble. Or resort to PR.

But that's another column.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

Root causes of global conflict

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE WORLD Economic Forum, at which President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo called for an international coalition in a war on poverty, ended its summit of the world's economic, political and academic elite in New York on Monday with diminished influence in setting the development agenda for the 21st century.

For 31 years, the forum had been held in Davos, the ski resort in Switzerland, where world leaders had talked about the problems of the world in a rarified atmosphere. Last week, the venue was transferred to New York as a "gesture of solidarity" of the Western world as it faced uncertainty in recovering from the economic blows of the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The 2,000-odd delegates who assembled at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in mid-town New York, held their meeting close to the ruins of the WTC and amid protests by a few thousand activists protesting against, among other things, the unequal distribution of benefits of globalization and the "greed" of the corporate world. With world opinion turned against terrorist violence, the NGOs marching in New York were less furious than the previous protests in Davos, and the tough New York police phalanx not only outnumbered the protesters but also shielded the delegates from harm.

The summit was held under the shadow of the global economic downturn deepened by the terrorist attacks, the rising anti-American sentiment over its global campaign against terror and the collapse of Enron which highlights corruption in one of the leading symbols of capitalism's corporate sector.

In New York, the agenda of the forum thrust to the forefront the security concerns arising from the attacks on the United States and these concerns highlighted such issues as "clash of civilizations," the root cause of conflict—such as poverty (which President Macapagal accented), inequity and intolerance—and the global economic outlook. The theme "fragile times" echoed in the meetings. Reports from New York said that in 1990, the theme was Japan's economic might, in 1994, the coming triumph of Asian values, in 1999, the future of the euro as a strong world currency, and in 2000, the transforming effects of IT (Information Technology). Kenneth Dam, the US treasury deputy secretary, echoed the concerns of the delegates over the economic outlook. He said latest figures indicating slight US gross domestic product growth in the fourth quarter of 2001 and a dip in unemployment showed the US economy had regained stability. "All of that means the US economy has probably bottomed-out," he said. "But one wild card is the possibility of another terrorist attack. Continuing the war on terrorism remains important."

There was plenty of soul-searching over the roots of conflict. Laurent Fabius, French finance minister, said: "If we want to get rid of terrorism, there is not only a war in terms of military action. There is a necessity of fighting a war in terms of helping poor countries to develop. If we want a stable world, we have to tackle these problems very seriously."

Ms Macapagal's speech echoes Fabius' theme, as well as that of United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan. He said, "I see the forum as an opportunity to address the global elite on behalf of those downtrodden masses; on behalf, especially of well over 1 billion people in today's world who are living without enough food to eat, without safe water to drink, without primary schooling or health care for their children—in short without the most basic requirements of human dignity."

He does not, however, believe that these are victims of globalization. "Their problem is not that they are included in the global market, but in most cases, they are excluded from it," he said. "But it is up to the global elite—to business and political leaders from the more fortunate countries—to prove that perception wrong, with actions that translate results for the downtrodden, exploited and excluded."

He said: "It is not enough to say, though it is true, that without business the poor have no hope of escaping poverty. Too many of them have no hope as it is. They need to be shown, by tangible examples making a difference to their lives that economics, properly applied, and profits, wisely invested, can bring social benefits within reach not only for the few but also for the many, and eventually for all.

"Many business leaders still think these are problems for governments to solve, and that business should concern itself only with the bottom line.

"But most of them understand that in the long run the bottom line depends on economic and social conditions, as well as political stability. And increasing numbers are realizing that they do not have to wait for governments to do the right thing—indeed, that they cannot afford to. In many cases, governments only find the courage and resources to do the right thing when business takes the lead."

He said, "no one is better placed than business leaders to refute the arguments of protectionists and penny-pinchers. They are the ones who can make the persuasive case for opening the markets of rich countries to labor-intensive products from poor ones and for an end to the farm export subsidies that make it impossible for farmers in poor countries to compete."

A 'green' celebration

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT was an incongruous site for a birthday celebration. The Mamplasan Loop in Biñan, Laguna is an otherwise nondescript exit road from the South Expressway, with a grassy depression near the tollbooths. Once overgrown with weeds and even used as a garbage dump, the area is now a green and serene spot, planted with young trees and ornamentals.

But as Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste tells it, the area struck her as an ideal site for a tree-planting project. "Luntiang Pilipinas," founded three years ago with Loren as honorary chair, has worked with the Philippine National Construction Corp. to turn the expressways into a "greenbelt." The Mamplasan loop was in fact the pioneering site for the venture. The idea of a "greenbelt," says the senator, was inspired by the lush greenery along the major thoroughfares of Singapore, enhancing that city-state's claim to being the "garden city" of Asia.

"I wanted to show our partners and the media what a tree-planting project can accomplish," Loren said by way of explaining why she chose to hold this "Pagdiriwang ng Kalikasan (Celebration of Nature)" on such a spot. Indeed, save for the occasional vehicle rushing by (it was a Sunday), it was easy to forget one was in the middle of a busy expressway.

"Luntiang Pilipinas" is actually a partnership of various sectors: national government agencies, private corporations, schools, non-government organizations and local governments, which are tasked with the maintenance of the over one million trees that have been planted all around the country. Planting trees is not enough, admits Loren. "The survival rate for the trees is just 30 percent, so I can be so *makulit* (persistent) with our mayors, nagging them to make sure they water and look after the trees we have already planted."

From 1998-2001 "Luntiang Pilipinas" reports, more than a million trees have been planted under the program, most of them in urban areas "to make (reforestation) accessible and visible to the greatest possible number of people."

* * *

AMONG THE GUESTS present at the "Pagdiriwang ng Kalikasan" were Loren's colleagues Senate President Franklin Drilon and Sen. Noli "Kabayan" de Castro. The two senators were called onstage after the Mass, celebrated by Fr. Jerry Orbos, SVD, to help Loren unveil a mural dedicated to nature.

Aside from exhibiting the success of the "Luntiang Pilipinas" projects, the celebration was also used to launch the "Luntiang Pilipinas" website as well as to formally acknowledge the support of institutional partners like the PNCC, San Miguel Corp., Compaq Computers, the Embassy of New Zealand and the local governments of Laguna.

Conspicuous in their red and fuchsia T-shirts were women scholars of the Tesda-Loren for Women program, which consists of livelihood assistance for women graduates of the various livelihood training programs. The "Ariel Tulong sa Pagsulong Livelihood Program," the subject of the latest "Ariel" detergent ads which feature Loren as endorser, was also launched that day.

Scholars and other beneficiaries of Loren's work then mounted the stage to present to the senator a memento, an image of Our Lady of Manaoag. Among them were Maj. Noel Buan, whose release from captivity by the New People's Army was negotiated by Loren, among others, after the national government had virtually written off the officer as a casualty of the insurgency. I spotted the Buan family—the major, his wife Cielo and their daughter—during the Mass, and I couldn't help but remember Cielo's anguished interviews on TV as she pleaded for her husband's release. Their presence and togetherness must have been quite a gift to Loren that day.

* * *

STILL on Loren, who is also the Senate majority leader, she most recently introduced a bill seeking to add "teeth" to the Anti-Mail-Order Bride Law by broadening its scope to include new trafficking schemes, especially through the Internet.

Senate Bill 1971 designates three agencies—the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Transportation and Communications—as lead enforcers of the anti-mail-order bride law.

Earlier, Loren exposed the operations of two US-based electronic mail-order bride firms that prey on Filipino women. The firms, both based in Florida, have been identified as The Davis Place International Internet Services and World Class Service. They maintain three websites that "exclusively and boldly sell Filipino women as brides and virtual sex commodities."

"*Ang tapang nila*, (they are so bold)," Loren remarked at a press conference held after the festivities. The websites, she said, have even gone so far as to include "derogatory reports" against Filipino legislators who have spoken out and filed bills seeking to monitor and regulate the "mail-order bride" racket.

* * *

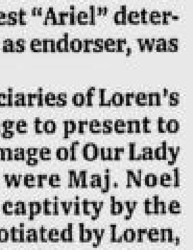
SENATE Bill 1971 should complement other legislative measures seeking to address the problem of trafficking of women and children for purposes of prostitution.

In the last Congress, Abanse! Pinay Rep. Patricia Sarenas successfully pushed and shepherded an anti-trafficking law through the House of Representatives. Unfortunately, its counterpart in the Senate failed to make it out of committee, and despite last-minute efforts, a law on trafficking failed to make it past the legislative mill.

Perhaps Loren can look up the fate of this trafficking bill in the Senate. Women legislators in the House have indicated their willingness to revive moves for the passage of the trafficking legislation in their chamber, and this time, hopefully, it can move more smoothly.

Reticent to discuss rising STDs

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

OF the million books and manuscripts in the New York Public Library, two items stand out in my memory. One is a collection of Philippine costumes, in watercolor, attributed to Damian Domingo and the other is a small anti-imperialist pamphlet on prostitution in the Philippines then under the US military. The latter even contained photographs of brothels that catered to the US military. Of course, it can be argued that prostitution was in the country long before the Americans arrived to colonize the Philippines in 1898, but what struck me was that it was alleged that every American military outpost maintained a brothel to service the "physical necessities" of the soldiers fighting the Filipino-American War.

In the light of the present Balikatan exercises and the campaign of "comfort women" to seek an apology for Japanese war crimes, the pamphlet in the New York Public Library suddenly became relevant again a century after it was printed. On TV the other night, I saw disappointed bar girls in Zamboanga waiting for the US servicemen who were confined to the military camp. This same story also carried a short film clip showing a Filipino health worker explaining the effective use of condoms in the fight against AIDS. At the turn of the last century the US military took drastic steps to control the spread of venereal disease among its soldiers—known prostitutes were not only placed under surveillance, they were subjected to regular health inspections—these precautionary acts were later seen as a form of regulation or legalization of prostitution in the Philippines. The thick reports of US military and civil officials are available in libraries but remain largely unread. Again, prostitution is swept under the rug.

In 1901, for example, a certain Dr. A. Lester Hazlett made an inspection of the conditions in the Philippines for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Columbus, Wisconsin. He was given assistance by Major General Arthur MacArthur (father of Douglas "I shall return" MacArthur) then military governor of the Philippines. On the whole, the report is favorable and while the main concern was liquor, there are references to prostitution that are worth rereading. Hazlett took MacArthur on his word and declared that prostitution is not licensed in the Philippines. There were 46 brothels known to the Manila police in the Sampaloc district which were home to 233 known prostitutes. Of this number, 124 were Japanese, 72 were Filipinas, 14 were Americans, 12 were Russians, three were Romanians, two Italians, two Europeans and one each of Spanish, Hungarian, Australian and Turkish nationality. This racial breakdown alone gives some idea into the type of women who were desirable or available at the time. The women were examined by military surgeons and the ones afflicted with venereal disease were sent to the San Lazaro hospital or deported. Whatever looked like regulation of prostitution was explained away as a necessary defense against venereal disease.

In these days of AIDS and other diseases, I went through contemporary documents and read, with great interest, one of the appendices to the 1901 report of Gen. Arthur MacArthur. Col. Charles Greenleaf, chief surgeon of the US military, wrote:

"The steady increase in venereal disease among our troops, from 8.97 percent in September 1900, to 20.42 percent of total sickness in April, furnishes ground for greatest apprehension, and is an item not exceeded in importance by any other one affecting the health and efficiency of the Army in the Philippines.

"Lest our forces become seriously crippled and an irreparable injury be done the people of these Islands by those whose object is to help and elevate them, the subject must be looked at squarely in the face, and dealt with as any other contagious disease.

"Wrecked health, mental and physical decay, a host of local disabilities which may affect almost any part of the body and the transmission of the disease to those yet unborn, sapping directly and indirectly the vigor of the race; why all this should generally be avoided as a topic unfit for public discussion, and only to be indirectly alluded to, is one of the mysteries that no one can explain. Our English-speaking race, usually so direct, frank and practical, have on this point carried commendable modesty, and a pardonable aversion to discuss unpleasant subjects in public, to such an extreme that we are credited with another nation as being insincere and hypocritical.

"We spend thousands to prevent the spread of small pox and yellow fever; we would take any necessary precautions, no matter how stringent, to prevent the spread of bubonic plague or leprosy in our midst, and yet we let this evil increase and gain new victims because public opinion forbids us to openly recognize that a certain class in the community gains its livelihood by a profession older than the days of Abraham, and to take steps to regulate this calling, as we should immediately do any other noxious trade or business hurtful to the public health."

Were diseased women a potent secret weapon used against the enemy in the Filipino-American War?

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Genes

MY son, Nico, is the spitting image of Lolo Godong, my father who died in 1936. Same handsome Indianish face, deep-set dark eyes, highbridge nose and that Lolo Godong trademark, big, wide Dumbo ears! Nico's got all of them! I grew up without a father and the amazing similarity pleases me no end. It's as if my dead father was reincarnated and living with us.

HIGH BLOOD

Minyong Ordoñez

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. **—Ed.**

Thank God for our genes. Genes are nature's way of preserving the specific and differentiating traits of the human race, tribes, clans extending all the way to families.

The science of genes, called genetics, is the branch of biology that determines our hereditary factors. Genes are carried in our chromosomes, the structure in our cell nucleus which is the smallest living matter capable of independent life. Genes are transferred along the same lineage of our family tree.

The role of genetics is even more pronounced when I realize that genes make a Chinese Chinese, an Indian Indian, a black African black African, through a series of continuity transfer that happens during conception in the mother's womb.

Mana-mana lang. I must have inherited my love for cooking from my grandfather Lolo Simeon, who died in 1942. As a 5-year-old boy, I remember watching Lolo Simeon cooking in front of a huge concrete *abuhan,* stirring the hot bubbly meat stew in a big *palayok. I* can still smell blended vinegar and garlic rising with the smoke burned by flames from crackling firewood. Lolo Simeon would scoop a spoonful of gravy to taste it, adding a pinch of salt, tasting it once more, and nodding his head when he got it right.

My grandfather was a genius with vinegar cuisine. His *paksiw, adobo* and *kinulob* were legend. His secret lay in the amount of vinegar used, an instinctive act. No measuring cup.

My killer dishes are based on coconut milk—*ginataang laing na pinangat, adobong manok sa gatang may dilaw, adobong hito sa gata at may mustasa.* The secret is how much vinegar I use by instinct, not by the measuring cup. And of course, as Lolo Simeon did it, I keep tasting and adjusting salt and pepper as I go along.

I learned to cook by starting with the basics—frying and sautéing. When I got married, my skill at cooking was honed. I became keen on the characteristics and uses of herbs and condiments, allowing me to create a distinctive taste in my dishes.

Onions, garlic and ginger are fantastic flavor creators, garlic the most piquant of all. Garlic alone can make or break a dish. It gives the oomph in *salpicao,* the ahhh in *adobo.* Onions and ginger are great for flavor embellishments. They also kill fishy and carcass smell. Steamed fish with ginger becomes aromatic. Soup with onions becomes piquant.

Herbs are terrific taste decor. They make dishes elegant. They act as the finishing touches, adding not only color but also fragrance, the hint of freshness. The *kinchay* in your fresh *lumpia,* chives in your *mami* soup, and basil in your *carbonara* tease your olfactory appetite, making the dish tempting.

One wonderful gene is hygiene genes.

My sister Nuncia, who lives in Chicago, is a squeaky-clean woman. When I'm vacationing in her house, I'm reminded of Lola Genia, our squeaky-clean grandmother who died in 1971. Nuncia's kitchen was always spanking clean and dry; so was my grandmother's sink in her old house in the province.

The kitchen floors were well scrubbed and swept three times a day. Toilets were scrubbed spanking clean daily. My sister and Lola Genia moved in the same manner, a close shave with the broom and quick with the mop. Both cleaned as they went. They never left the house if things were not in their proper places. When you lived with them, you did your part in cleaning. You felt ashamed being idle. *Nakakahiya kapag burara.*

The other wonderful gene is entrepreneurial genes. My cousin Estelita in Cagayan de Oro comes from a line of business-driven ancestors. Her grandfather was a hardworking copra dealer in the far-out towns of Misamis Oriental. Estelita's mother, Tia Aurora, ran many small businesses all at the same time. Estelita is a doctor who also excelled in cottage-industry businesses—to cite a few, handbag making and peanut butter bottling. All her adult children ran their own businesses; optometry stores, gasoline stations, rice and corn dealership and a chicken dressing plant.

The most transcendent genes are related to holiness. I've lived with these holiness genes, manifested in three generations of women in our clan.

My great-great-grandmother Lola Untiang was the lone, most prayerful woman in town. When I was a kid, she was 90 years old, hunched and slow. She needed to hold on to someone when walking. Every day, every afternoon, she'd be half sitting, half kneeling by the huge church entrance where the afternoon sun cast its soft light on the pages of her novena books, which she read close to her eyes. She'd stop praying only when dusk set in.

My grandmother Lola Genia was a daily Mass-goer. Her prayer habits, which she imparted to her children, consisted in praying the "Angelus" at 6 p.m. daily and the rosary before bedtime.

My Inay Aurea, Lola Genia's daughter, was prayerful too. She taught all her children to pray. In Inay Aurea's old age, she was mostly bedridden and in constant pain because of her hip bone disease. She did nothing but prayed when she was in pain. I would catch her saying the rosary in the middle of the night, offering her pain to God. I'd never seen such mortification in my life.

Genes, however, are like news. Some are good news. Some are bad news.

Maharot! Mana sa ina! refers to a slut of a mother whose sexy daughter is four months pregnant on her wedding day.

Sugarol! Mana sa ama! refers to a family man who is an incurable casino gambler and whose father is the acknowledged *sabungero* in his hometown.

My Uncle Simo's genes were in between good and bad. Let's just say they're mediocre genes. Uncle Simo alias Kid Bagal was laid-back. According to my mother, Uncle Simo took after Lolo Indo, the brother of my grandmother. Lolo Indo was an only son, pampered and raised as a *señorito* in his youth. Uncle Simo and Lolo Indo had similarities. They both walked in a slow, leisurely way. They both loved to sleep late and wake up late. Uncle Simo is 70 and he seems happy living a simple laid-back life in the province. Lolo Indo died many years ago. May his soul rest in peace.

Today, my own genes have a recipient already. He is Carlos, my one-year-old grandson. This baby is precocious with food. When eating, Carlos will first taste the food by letting it settle on his tongue. He spits out bland baby food. He will only accept food which tastes delicious. He likes his rice laced with rich *kare-kare* or *caldereta* gravy. Baby Carlos will grow up a good cook, like me. *Mana-mana lang.*

Minyong Ordoñez is chair and CEO of Basic Advertising.

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Info on coconut oil is contrary to facts

IN RESPONSE to the column of Neal Cruz last Jan. 30, 2002, let me share a few notes regarding coconut oil's unique health-promoting properties.

The fat most people talk about in terms of diet and health is cholesterol. And diets rich in cholesterol and saturated fats are believed to contribute immensely to the increase of good lipids and the development of atherosclerosis, a disease characterized by the hardening of the arteries caused in part by high cholesterol levels in the blood. Coconut oil, a highly special type of saturated fat, has been labeled as "bad" being a "material in the manufacture of cholesterol." Triglycerides are the ones we need to be most concerned about when it comes to diet and health, that is, "the medium and long-chain triglycerides."

Saturated fat is either long-chain (with a carbon chain of 14 or longer) or medium-chain (6-12 carbon chains). In its chemical composition, coconut oil is made of 63.5 percent medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs). Medium-chain triglycerides are much more easily digested and absorbed by the liver, and are converted to energy. Compared to long-chain triglycerides (LCT) such as those derived from soybean oil, corn oil, butterfat and other animal fats, the ingestion of coconut oil containing MCTs results in a higher resting metabolic rate (RMR) for the individual, indicating a greater consumption of energy in calories, thus preventing the deposition of fats in the body. MCTs, in fact, are now in the market as components in infant food and nutritional supplements for the sick and convalescent.

These facts have all been overlooked and quite a number of misconceptions on coconut oil have been popular with the public and even to some scientists. However, this is beginning to change, as the amazing nutritional and therapeutic benefits of the tropical oils, especially coconut oil, are becoming better known.

Filipinos are fortunate enough to produce coconut oil. It is not only different from other saturated fats, it is also different from other tropical oils. It is the only oil which has the highest medium-chain fatty acid content (C8, C10 and C12) having remarkable properties as anti-viral, antimicrobial and anti-protozoal. No oil or vegetable oil contains these unique properties other than coconut oil. In fact, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit recently signed a food fortification program endorsing the use of vitamin A-fortified coconut edible oil, indicating that coconut oil is indeed safe and will not cause any unhealthy effects to humans.

Much has been said about coconut oil, yet many of them are contrary to facts. It would be better if we could help promote public awareness of information concretely supported by documented scientific evidence.

—EMIL V. CARANDANG, executive director, Philippine Coconut Research & Development Foundation Inc., 3rd Floor, PCRDF Bldg., Pearl Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

What happens now to Placer Dome commitments?

WE of the Marinduque Council for Environmental Concerns (Macec) and fellow Marinduqueños are very interested in President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's visit to Canada because one of its big mining companies, Placer Dome Inc., the author of one of the worst mining disasters in the world, the 1996 Marcopper Mining spill, just upped and left Marinduque and the country without so much as a by-your-leave and with many of its responsibilities still unfulfilled. We are greatly disappointed that the President did not grant the request from a delegation of Marinduqueños to meet with her before she left.

We wanted to ask her to bring up the issue of Placer Dome in her talks with the Canadian government and the people there, including our *kababayan*. Will the Canadian government compel Placer Dome to honor its commitments? How can an avowedly "good corporate citizen" renege on its commitment to then President Fidel V. Ramos and pull out of a country all of a sudden? Does Placer Dome understand the meaning of the word "commitment"? Is that the way Canadian business corporations treat their head of state? How can it pull out of a country that has been the home of its mining operations for almost 30 years where it made large profits and just leave a legacy of ecological degradation, of real dangers to health and life to the community there?

Why did it not bother to comply with the directives of Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez with regard to the recommendations of the Klohn Crippen Report, an engineering review that Placer Dome itself commissioned on some of its major dam structures especially the Tapian Pit and Maguilaguila Dam? Before running away, how could Placer Dome have entered into a memorandum of agreement with Marcopper Mining Corp. without making public the terms of this agreement and how we the stakeholders felt about it? How could it treat us like dirt? Can Canadians be part of such an ecologically unfriendly and irresponsible corporation by continuing to invest their hard-earned money in it?

So many questions keep cropping up. But the last question that occurs to me is: Will President Macapagal, "the Iron Lady," stand up for us Marinduqueños, for all of us Filipinos and fight with us for our rights?

—MSGR. SENEN M. MALAPAD, chair, Marinduque Council for Environmental Concerns (Macec), Social Action Center, Mogpog, Marinduque

Cavite EPZ leads way in review of IPP deal

WE would like to commend the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) for its decision to revoke the Cavite Export Processing Zone's (CEPZ) power purchase agreement with Magellan Cogeneration Inc. (MCI).

We learned last year that MCI was no longer generating continuous and reliable power. We also knew at that time that Peza was conducting an investigation on MCI's performance. Hence, we requested Peza to provide us with documents regarding MCI's performance. Unfortunately, they were not able to do so. Nevertheless, we are happy of the outcome of their investigation.

Peza's decision is very timely, especially since we are in the midst of an economic downturn and very much in need of investor confidence. We need a reliable supply of energy to ensure uninterrupted production and to encourage investors to infuse capital into the country. For this reason, I hope that Trade Secretary Mar Roxas also throws his support behind Peza's decision.

We also call for the immediate review of all contracts with Independent Power Producers (IPPs). Section 68 of Republic Act 9136 (Electric Industry Reform Act) mandates the creation of an inter-agency committee that shall immediately undertake a thorough review of all IPP contracts. The Interagency Review Committee should follow the actions taken by Peza. It is time for the members of the committee to get their act together and act in the interest of the Filipino people.

We have paid a steep price for these contracts through the Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) collected from consumers every month. It is time to relieve consumers of these burdensome and onerous power contracts.

—REP. LORETTA ANN P. ROSALES, Akbayan Party List, House of Representatives, Quezon City

PUSH THE POPULAR PLATFORM FOR REDRESS, DECLINE THE SUPREME COURT GAMBIT

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WITH A VERY CLEVER STRATEGIST AT HER CORNER, IS GETTING VERY GOOD ON THE POWER GAME CHESS BOARD. MUCH TOO GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY'S SAKE.

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO has challenged her detractors on the administration's policy to incorporate armed U.S. ground combatants against the Abu Sayyaf to question the same to the Supreme Court.

Just as the invitation to the U.S. was a gambit to prop-up her beleaguered government, the move to draw the battle into legal ground is a ploy to revive ala Marcos the columnist, terrorist bogey, as justification for a witch hunt, well as to lock-up the claim to legitimacy and mandate for her policy amidst popular dissent. After all, the Supreme Court has proven to be a reliable and cooperative political issues that should otherwise be addressed to the sovereign power of the people indirectly through their respresentatives or directly by their action, to decide.

The gambit should therefore be declined. Instead, the people by their popular action must directly invoke the protectorate provision of the constitution to preserve the sovereignty of the state and the territorial integrity of the country. It would do well also to drop the anti American tenor of the protest, for this is precisely part of the entrapment. The Tony Blair, London trip is an added embellishment, consolidated by a U.S. Public Relations offensive. Indeed, Gloria has evolved into a first class power player. Except, the truth wills out.

The weakness lies in the seething social volcano that cannot be capped by any institutional cover nor straightjacketed by a system that has been outgrown and is thus bursting at the seams. Besides, the region is also convulsing and Gloria is only stage-acting.

Gloria's power plays will therefore be for naught.

ANG BAGONG KATIPUNAN
SPIRIT OF HEROES MOVEMENT FOR SELF-DETERMINATION
PEOPLES ACTION FOR THE OUTSTER OF GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

ADVT.

Angles in Israeli's killing in Boracay

THE RECENT fatal stabbing of an Israeli strolling on the beach in Boracay with his girlfriend, also an Israeli who was stabbed in the arm by the assailant could be the handiwork of someone who hates Israelis.

Local police authorities must inform all Israeli tourists about the possible presence of Palestinian tourists, al-Qaida sympathizers, Abu Sayyaf members as well as fanatical followers of Osama bin Laden among the locals. Like oil and water, these two peoples don't mix. Their enmity dates back to time immemorial.

Of course, there is the other possibility that it was a plain and simple hold-up/robbery that sadly led to murder. The attacker and his friends were probably familiar with the routine of the Israeli couple and waited for them to stroll on the beach way past midnight. The victim had been living in Boracay for two months.

All these angles must be considered by the authorities.

They should also consider that women terrorists are now even more violent than men. They may be sexy on the beach, but they have hearts of steel. Watch out!

—MANUEL L. MORATO, Doña Consuelo Bldg., 192-194 Tomas B. Morato Ave., Quezon City

Global leaders urge tackling roots of terror

NEWS ANALYSIS

Paul Taylor

NEW YORK—Global political and business leaders came to New York to understand the world after Sept. 11, but will the all-dominant United States heed their advice to tackle the economic and cultural roots of terrorism?

If there is a single coherent message from the annual World Economic Forum, a chaotic whirl of speeches, debates and glittering receptions, it is that military action alone will not defeat extremist violence, nor lessen the attraction of militant Islam to the alienated youth in the "Arab street."

"The United States, being the hegemonic power today, has to lead toward development instead of taking a purely unilateral approach toward terrorism," said George Soros, a billionaire American investor turned philanthropist in Eastern Europe.

Extremism would never be eradicated "unless we take care of the social needs, the inequality and disparity between the less developed countries," Soros said.

Former US national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski made a similar point, noting the United States had overcome the violence of the Black Panthers and other 1970s urban guerrillas not just with repression but with civil rights legislation.

Secretary of State Colin Powell and Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, who represented the Bush administration at the global talk fest, acknowledged the need to combat poverty but focused on the need to combat "evil regimes."

President George W. Bush set the backdrop last week by announcing a record peacetime military spending increase and vowing to take on an "axis of evil" in Iraq, Iran and North Korea, but offering little more money for development.

The gathering of 2,700 of the world's power elite—the ultimate networking event—was held for the first time in Manhattan rather than half way up a Swiss mountain in Davos, in a gesture of solidarity with New Yorkers after the destruction of the World Trade Center by suicide hijackers last Sept. 11.

The celebrity shoulder-rubbing at champagne receptions was in stark contrast to the new subjects on the agenda of this year's talk fest, including recession, and the threat of biological and corporate security in an age of catastrophic terrorism.

Far from the hubris of Davos 2000, at the height of the dot-com technology stocks boom, the mood of this year's forum was one of uncertainty and insecurity about the future, mirrored by the omnipresence of security guards inside and the state of siege outside the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

For the first time, the organizers gave their platform to bishops, Muslim and Hindu clerics and rabbis for a dialogue on shared values and to deny religious legitimacy to violence.

Political advocates of a moderate Islam, such as Jordan's King Abdullah and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed, were given pride of place to preach tolerance and castigate self-appointed prophets of a war on Western civilization.

"Islam can never sanction the killing of innocents," the Jordanian monarch said, welcoming what he called a much-needed debate in the Muslim world.

He said extremism arose from the despair of a young population lacking economic opportunity and political reform, as well as "the burning injustice of Palestine."

But Mahathir, long criticized in the West as authoritarian, said the United States "should be prepared to listen to other views and not just dismiss them because they are different.

"At the moment, we find it very difficult to penetrate the mind of the US. We are asked to have American standards in everything," he said.

A large number of Arabs and Muslims participated, and many voiced anger at the United States' perceived unwillingness to press Israel to end the occupation and settlement of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and allow a viable Palestinian state.

A dinner on US-Arab relations attended by Gulf royals and senators turned into a recrimination session in which the Arabs accused Washington of mortgaging its policy to Israel, and the Americans accused the Arabs of undemocratic, opaque rule and missing out on globalization.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton said Palestinian President Yasser Arafat bore most responsibility for missing historic opportunities for peace. But she, too, said the United States under Bush was not doing enough to provide a framework for Middle East peace.

Many economists at the forum were less optimistic than O'Neill about the prospects of a robust recovery this year from a US recession that was aggravated by the shock of Sept. 11.

Some pointed to the risk of fresh terrorist attacks or US military action, as well as the extra cost of security to firms and governments, as factors weighing on growth prospects.

The impact of Sept. 11 and the proximity of Ground Zero dampened the ardor of several thousand anti-globalization protesters who marched peacefully against "corporate greed" under the watchful eye of the New York Police Department.

The shock of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon has halted, at least for now, the violence that dogged global events such as the 1999 Seattle World Trade Organization meeting and last year's Group of Eight summit in Genoa, Italy.

A rival World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, drew leftist icons such as militant French farm leader Jose Bove and radical American thinker Noam Chomsky to denounce the evils of unbridled globalization and capitalist exploitation.

The WEF organizers sought to disarm them partly by focusing on so-called corporate responsibility initiatives on public health in the Third World and the environment.

Reuters

Metro Manila should be a 'traffic discipline zone'

THIS is a reaction to the selective declaration of certain highways and major intersections in Metro Manila as "traffic discipline zones." First, they included the North and South Luzon Tollways, inclusive of the elevated portion from Magallanes to Bicutan or the Skyway System. Just recently, the intersections of Edsa and Taft Avenue, Guadalupe, Ortigas, Shaw and Aurora Boulevards were added to the list. Under the set-up, traffic rules and regulations are supposed to be strictly enforced in these zones, supposedly to improve the flow of traffic.

I am wondering what the traffic authorities are going to do with the rest of Metro Manila's roads where the most undisciplined road users (i.e. jeepneys, tricycles, pedicabs, sidewalk vendors and even pedestrians) abound. Why don't they declare the whole of Metro Manila roads as a Traffic Discipline Zone and put the enforcement of traffic rules and regulations under a unified command?

—T.S. ATIENZA, Marcelo Green Village, Parañaque City

The WORLD

Editor **Luvern B. Gueco**

Bush's $2.1-trillion wartime budget wins widespread praise

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush is winning widespread praise for the top priorities in his new budget—waging war on terrorism and increasing homeland security.

But that isn't stopping Democrats from vowing to try to reorder the rest of his $2.13 trillion spending plan, which they contend shortchanges many domestic programs.

House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt said the president's other spending choices "will put us further into deficit, use money from the Social Security and Medicare trust funds that both parties called off limits, and cut education, health care, skills training and rural programs."

The president and his Cabinet were wasting no time trying to rebut those arguments. White House budget chief Mitchell Daniels, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and other officials planned to fan out across the Capitol on Tuesday to testify before various committees.

For his part, the president was flying to Pittsburgh to visit a hospital as a way of calling attention to the huge increase he is seeking to combat bioterrorism.

Normally, there are weeks of preliminary hearings before any votes are taken on a president's spending plan. But this year, Bush's budget will face a showdown vote on Wednesday over one key element of the package—his request for an economic stimulus package to fight the current recession.

Democrats, who want a scaled-back version of the stimulus package, are locked in a battle with Republicans who are trying to protect all the tax breaks for corporations and higher-income individuals included in the bill that passed the House but stalled in the Senate in December.

Democrats believe the $162 billion in tax cuts and other stimuli for this year and 2003 are weighted too heavily to corporations and upper income Americans.

They have even bigger objections to Bush's request for $344 billion to extend his 10-year, $1.35-trillion tax cut for two additional years past the current 2010 expiration date.

Democrats blame that tax cut for helping to push the federal budget back into the red. They say it is also forcing the president to make deep cuts or freeze spending across a wide swath of government.

While Bush's budget would increase spending by $76 billion—or 3.7 percent—over the current year, much of that increase is taken up by increases for defense and homeland security.

Bush would boost Pentagon spending and authority to award contracts in future years by $48 billion, a 14.5 percent increase which would be the largest in percentage terms since Ronald Reagan won a 19.8 percent jump in 1982. Pentagon spending under Reagan represented 28 percent of the federal budget in 1984; under Bush's plan it is estimated to hit 17.8 percent in 2007.

Bush would nearly double spending on homeland security, to $ 38 billion.

Bush said the money was vital to fight "a long campaign to rid the world of terrorists."

"We need to be able to send our troops on the battlefields in places that many of us never thought there would be a battlefield," Bush told cheering troops Monday at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. "We need to replace aging aircraft and get ready to be able to defend freedom with the best equipment possible." ***AP***

$6B set aside to counter bioterrorism

WASHINGTON—Nearly $6 billion will be spent during the new budget year to prepare for bioterrorist attacks, "a new American vulnerability laid bare," if lawmakers go along with President George W. Bush's proposals.

Barely a budget blip before Sept. 11, bioterrorism accounts for some of the largest increases the president is proposing.

"This new investment shows the president is absolutely determined to make sure our response capabilities get to where they need to be," Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said Monday of the proposals for the budget year beginning Oct. 1.

Bush, Thompson and Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge were traveling to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center on Tuesday to promote the funding to fight bioterror.

Public health officials at the center monitor activity at regional hospitals and relay any trouble to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's the kind of early warning system that the administration wants to spread to other states.

The president has asked Congress for some $300 million to help states create similar networks that could be key in the case of biological or chemical attacks.

Ridge noted that, when combined with money already approved for this year, bioterrorism preparation would see nearly $10 billion over just two years, "which is absolutely unprecedented." It's needed, he said, to combat what the budget proposal called "a new American vulnerability laid bare." Before Sept. 11, the government was spending less than $1.5 billion each year.

Ridge added that much of the spending would improve the public health system generally.

Research into treatments and vaccines for biological agents, for instance, may be helpful in treating more common killers such as malaria, tuberculosis or the flu. Improving labs and computer systems for local public health agencies, experts say, will be useful whether people are getting sick due to terrorism or a natural outbreak. ***AP***

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Journal editor seeks talks with kidnappers

KARACHI—Saying he has not heard from them for days, the managing editor of the Wall Street Journal appealed to the kidnappers of reporter Daniel Pearl to make contact and offered them a private dialogue to "address your concerns."

In an open letter released late Monday, Paul Steiger said establishing a channel of direct communication could help end the "great deal of confusion" caused by hoax e-mails from people who claimed to be holding Pearl.

The letter was addressed to the National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty.

That previously unknown group signed a Jan. 27 e-mail which first claimed that Pearl, who had disappeared four days earlier, was being held. Attached were photographs of the journalist—one with a gun pointed at his head. The e-mail demanded that Washington return Pakistani prisoners held at the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for trial in Pakistan.

The Bush administration has ruled out any negotiations.

"I know that the National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty is very serious and wants others to know about its movement. To assure that this happens it is important for you to respond to this message," Steiger's letter said.

"I have not heard from you for several days and want to begin a dialogue that will address your concerns and bring about Danny's safe release," Steiger's letter said.

"Since your last e-mail I have received numerous e-mails from people who claim that they are holding Danny. Because of these claims, it has become difficult for me to know that I am communicating with the people holding Danny. These individuals have caused a great deal of confusion.

"Also these numerous messages, which have been made public, detract from your serious concerns. The world is getting a mixed message, and perhaps a negative impression of the National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty," the Steiger letter said.

He suggested the kidnappers use the e-mail account or private telephone number of one of two Pearl friends, both best men at his wedding, to restore communication.

"This line of communication would show me that Danny is with you and would allow us one-to-one contact. We are eager to hear from you soon," Steiger concluded.

Pearl's abductors last released a photo of him Wednesday, with a threat to kill him in 24 hours.

Mariane Pearl, who is six months pregnant with the couple's first child, also urged the kidnappers to contact her.

"Don't harm an innocent man because you're just going to create one more misery," she said Monday in a BBC television interview. "Using Daniel as a symbol and all of this is completely wrong, completely wrong."

"If anyone's going to give his life to save him it's me," she said. "Please make contact with me—I'm ready." *AP*

SIGN OF PEACE

A white dove on an Afghan's head outside the Blue Mosque in Mazar-e-Sharif, the ancient capital of northern Afghanistan on Feb 5. Thousands of white pigeons, a sign of peace for Afghans, nest outside the mosques spared by 23 years of wars in Afghanistan.

Iran denies coddling Taliban

TEHRAN—Amid an escalating war of words with Washington, Iran angrily denied US accusations it was sheltering Taliban and al-Qaida fighters fleeing Afghanistan as the interim Afghan government struggled to control factional fighting.

Officials in Tehran Monday warned any US attack on Iran would be an "irreparable mistake," while in Afghanistan the interim government played down the effect of tribal and ethnic fighting in the north and east of that country.

In Kabul, visiting Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov offered aid to rebuild the war-torn country occupied by the Soviet Union for 10 years, and said Afghan leaders understood the need for Moscow to play a role in reconstruction.

A pro-Iranian Afghan leader distanced his group from Tehran as the war of words with Washington escalated.

"Politically, Iran does not agree with the war of the Americans against al-Qaida and the Taliban. We are on the side of the Americans in this fight and that shows we do not agree with Iran," said powerful Hazara leader Karim Khalili, head of the pro-Iranian Hizb-i-Wahdat party.

Earlier, Iran furiously denied harboring Taliban or al-Qaida fighters.

Cautioning against any US military strike on Iran, foreign ministry spokesperson Hamid-Reza Asefi also dismissed US President George W. Bush's charge Tehran was developing weapons of mass destruction. *AFP*

Diet rejects no-confidence vote against minister

TOKYO—Japan's ruling coalition defeated a no-confidence motion brought against the agriculture minister on Tuesday, a bittersweet victory for Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi who suddenly looks vulnerable with his popularity in tatters.

The motion against Tsutomu Takebe, whose handling of the nation's mad cow crisis has been widely criticized, was largely symbolic as the ruling parties had enough votes to quash it.

More worrying for Koizumi was that the motion came forward at all. Since he swept to power last April on a reformist platform, Koizumi's enormous public appeal has prevented the opposition from protesting too noisily against weaknesses in his government.

Those days appeared to be ending with the first no-confidence motion against a member of the Koizumi Cabinet.

The move showed a concerted effort by the sponsors of the bill—the conservative Liberals, the centrist Democrats, and the Socialist and Communist parties—to capitalize on Koizumi's plunging public support following the dismissal of his popular foreign minister.

Japan's media commentators are already saying that the sudden sacking last week of Makiko Tanaka raises leadership questions about Koizumi himself that may eventually cost him his job.

Parliamentary spokesperson Soichi Saito said 186 legislators voted for the no-confidence motion against 276 who rejected it. There were no defections from the ruling coalition, but of the 18 abstentions 10 were members of Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party. Makiko Tanaka voted against the motion. *AP*

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Malaysia eyes extradition of terror suspects to US

KUALA LUMPUR—An extradition treaty existed which could require Malaysia to turn over terrorist suspects arrested locally to the United States, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said.

But "if there is not enough proof, we will not surrender the suspect to the US," Mahathir told a news conference Monday for Malaysian reporters during a visit to New York, the Bernama national news agency reported.

Mahathir's comment appeared to allow room for the extradition of Yazid Sufaat, a Malaysian jailed for allegedly belonging to a local militant group and accused of helping three plotters involved in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Mahathir's comment also came just hours after his deputy, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, appeared to rule out handing Yazid to US officials.

"As far as we are concerned, he has committed a serious offense and we cannot hand him over to others to be extradited," Bernama quoted Abdullah as saying in Kuala Lumpur.

Mahathir, who personally steers government policy on important issues, said an extradition treaty existed between the United States and Malaysia.

He said that if the United States presented enough proof of a person's involvement in planning or carrying out terrorist attacks against the United States, then under the treaty Malaysia may have to turn that person over to US authorities, Bernama reported.

Rais Yatim, Malaysia's de facto law minister, was cited as saying in local media Tuesday that the government had not received a formal US request to extradite Yazid.

Yazid was the first of 23 recent arrests in a crackdown on what officials say is a local Islamic group with ties to al-Qaida and a plot to bomb the US Embassy and other targets in neighboring Singapore.

Police have not charged Yazid with any crime but are holding him under a security law which allows for indefinite detention without trial. Authorities accuse the militant group of threatening national security.

Officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Yazid is cooperating with police and has provided details of meetings he held with two Sept. 11 hijackers and Zacarias Moussaoui, who is charged with conspiring in the attacks.

The New York Times, citing unidentified officials, reported last week that Washington was negotiating for Yazid's extradition to face charges in the United States. A US Embassy spokesperson in Kuala Lumpur declined to comment. ***AP***

Anwar: I had no power to order cover-up

KUALA LUMPUR—A final appeal by jailed ex-Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim against his corruption conviction entered its second day Tuesday, with his lawyers arguing he had no authority to order the police to cover-up sex allegations.

Anwar's lead counsel, Raja Aziz Addruse, told the Federal Court, the country's highest, that there was no evidence to show that Anwar had authority over the police.

He said that during the High Court trial, Mohamad Said Anwang—one-time chief of police intelligence—had said that he took orders from the inspector general of police and home (interior) minister.

"Was Anwar in a position to use his office in his capacity as deputy premier and finance minister? Legally it can't be said that he abused his position," he added.

Raja Aziz said Mohamad's deputy Amir Junus was evasive in his reply when asked if Anwar had directed him to cover-up allegations of sexual misconduct.

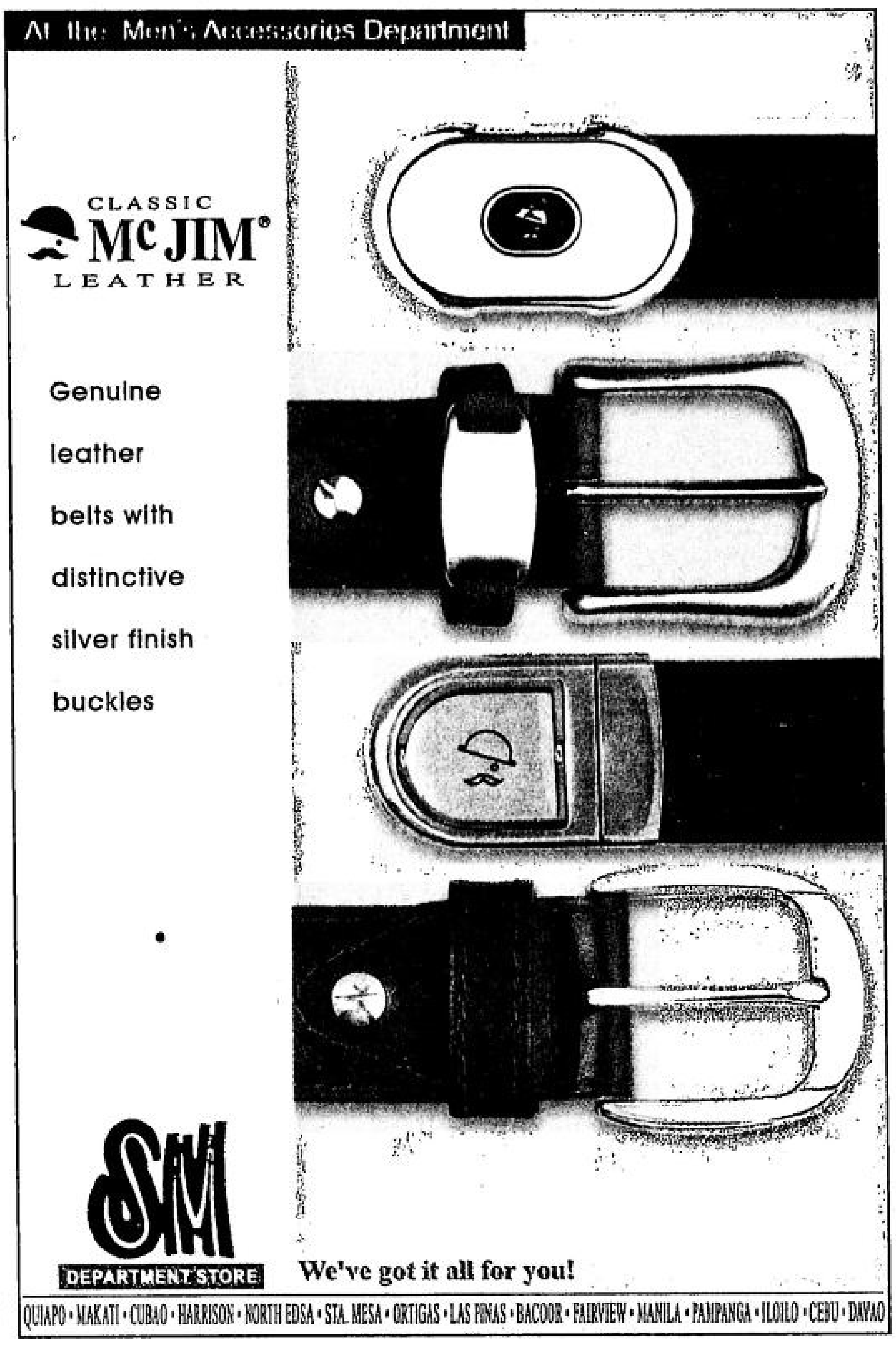
"The evidence of the two people is not reliable," he said.

Raja Aziz said the Court of Appeal and the High Court always ruled in favor of the two policemen.

"The evidence of Mohamad Said and Amir is the starting point. Everything we say in our favor is tested against them. The benefit is not given to us," he said. "So it was difficult to get our case over."

At issue was whether Anwar had told the policemen to force two people—his wife's driver and the sister of his political secretary—to retract accusations of sexual misconduct against him.

Anwar, who said he was still suffering from severe back pain, was brought into court in a wheelchair, wearing neck and back braces and escorted by a dozen prison guards and policemen. ***AFP***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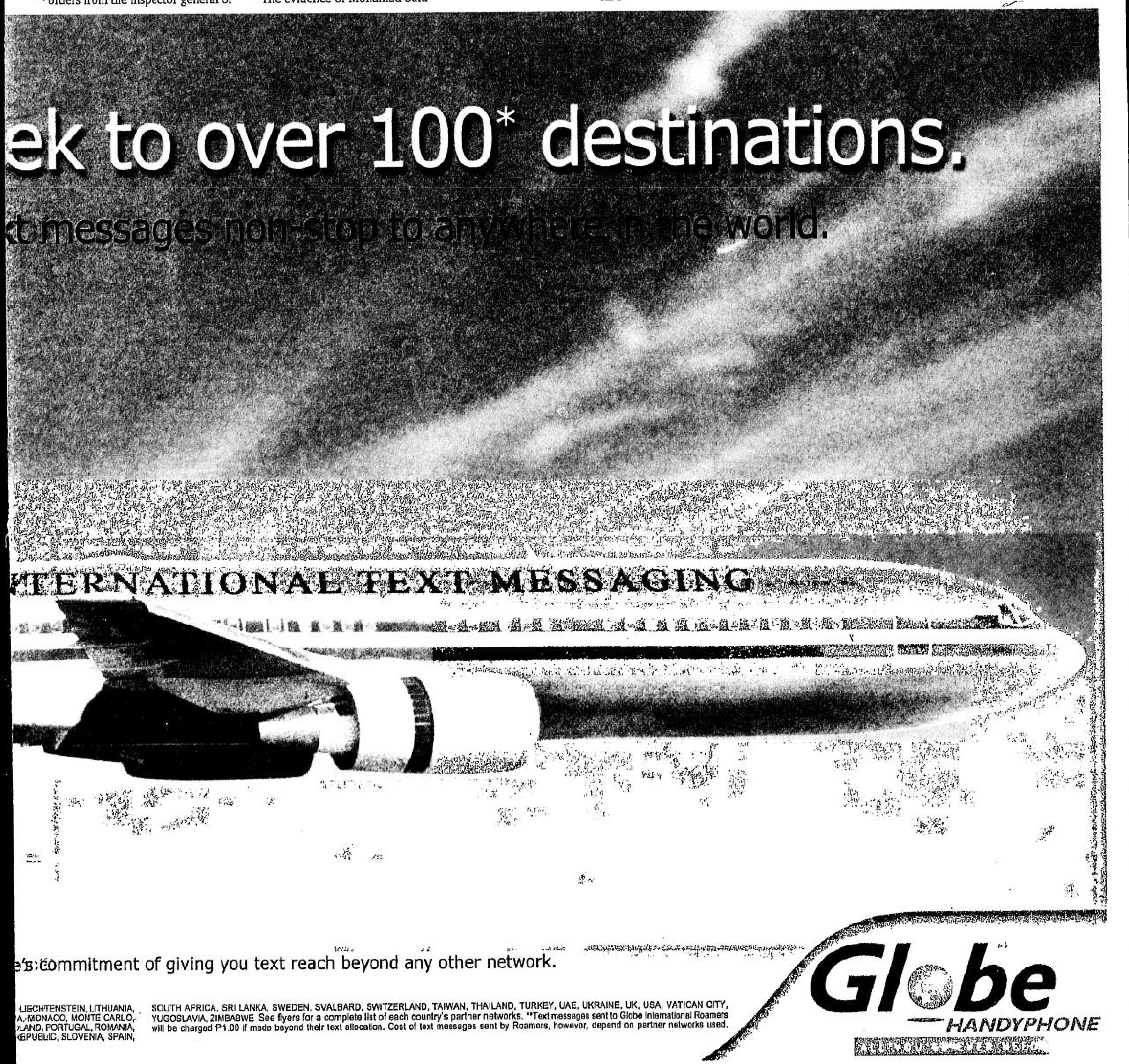
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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Northeastern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 20°
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 21° Lo 13°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 28° Lo 18°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 20°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 20°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 17°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 19°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 22°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/02/06/02

ROUNDUP

LGUs can monetize IRA

NAGA CITY—Gov. Luis Villafuerte, chair of the League of Provinces of the Philippines, told local government officials that the Department of Budget and Management has agreed to the "securitization and monetization" of the remaining P7.8-billion balance of the 2000 IRA through bonds. He said the LGUs could monetize the bonds at a discount upon complying with requirements. But Villafuerte said the LGUs could also opt to wait for six years, when the trust fund matures, to collect the full payment of the IRA balance of year 2000. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 hog traders held up

ROSARIO, Batangas—On their way to buy hogs for top *lechon* store Lydia's Lechon, two traders lost P63,000 and their wallets to highway robbers along the national road in Barangay San Carlos, this town, on Sunday, police said. The victims were identified as Pablo Javier, 41, and Juanito Javier, 57, both of Tanauan City. They were on board a Mitsubishi Canter driven by Regil Japin, 32, of Sariaya, Quezon, on their way to San Juan town when three unidentified men riding on a Yamaha motorcycle and armed with .45 cal. pistols flagged them and announced a holdup.

Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

No spread of STDs

LAPU-LAPU CITY—The city health office said there was no need to worry about the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) with the deployment of 250 American soldiers at the Mactan Benito Ebuen Air Base, which would be used as refueling station for US aircraft in the "Balikatan" exercises. Dr. Rodulfo Berame, CHO head, said an inspection did not find any American soldier dropping by karaoke or KTV bars and disco houses in the city in mid-January. "Besides, the (commercial sex workers) were not allowed to go near or inside the air base," he said.

Debra Jane Magallon, PDI Visayas Bureau

Guiani; 76

COTABATO CITY—Former Commission on Elections Commissioner Japal Guiani Sr. died Sunday from a lingering illness. He was 76. Guiani, who was among the first elected councilors of Cotabato City in 1959, died at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City at about 4 a.m. His remains were airlifted to Cotabato City on the same day and were buried in Barangay Gang, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao. Guiani was regional trial court judge for Central Mindanao until he was named Comelec commissioner by then President Fidel Ramos. *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bishops seek Lamitan findings

By Edwin O. Fernandez
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—The Catholic bishops of Mindanao are asking the House and the Senate committees that conducted separate inquiries into the alleged military-Abu Sayyaf collusion to make public their findings "for the sake of truth and justice."

The bishops, led by Cotabato Archbishop and Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) President Orlando Quevedo, issued a statement after a CBCP meeting in Tagaytay City on Monday.

The statement contained two urgent appeals addressed to President Macapagal-Arroyo, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay and Rep. Prospero Pichay, whose respective committees conducted the probes.

Magsaysay and Pichay separately held public hearings in August last year. The inquiry held in Basilan, Zamboanga City and Congress ended in September.

It stemmed from issues raised by Lamitan's parish priest Cirilo Nacorda and residents that some military personnel were aiding the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

More than 20 people have supported Nacorda's belief of a collusion among some military and government officials, and the bandits.

The bishops noted that recently, a senator made public "his participation in the delivery of ransom money to the kidnappers, contrary to the disavowals of some of the protagonists."

The bishops did not specifically mention the name of the senator, but Sen. Sergio Osmeña admitted in public that his private plane was used to carry a bag later known to have contained the ransom money for the kidnappers in Basilan.

Raising deep concern over the prevailing peace and order situation in Mindanao, the bishops said that if the congressional findings were not disclosed, they would ask the President to form an independent probe body and to place the witnesses and their families under the government's witness protection program.

Earlier, a letter of appeal was sent to the President and signed by delegates from 21 archdioceses and parishes in Mindanao who attended the 11th Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference in October last year in Malaybalay City.

"Basilan's plight is the plight of Mindanao and the entire country," the Mindanao bishops said. "Even now, we are also greatly disturbed over the unresolved kidnappings of Fr. Giuseppi Pierantoni in Zamboanga del Sur and Dr. Rose Agustin in Cotabato City.

"(We) commend the courage of the Lamitan witnesses, many of whom are ordinary citizens who have risked their lives for the sake of a brighter future to Basilan," the statement said.

They commended the dedication of military men in their efforts to keep the peace in Mindanao.

"However, there can be no lasting peace without the pursuit of truth and justice for all the past and the present victims of the senseless violence that has plagued our land," they said.

Fire razes Bohol market; ₱230M in property lost

TUBIGON, Bohol—A fire of still unknown origin razed the town's market on Monday dawn, destroying about P250 million in property.

No one was reported hurt in the fire that lasted about two and a half hours.

SFO4 Arnil Bagolor, Tubigon fire marshal, said his men heard shouts for help at about 3 a.m. after thick smoke rose from RM Commercial, a dry goods stall that sold paint and other products.

He said his men immediately rushed to the scene, about 30 meters from the fire station. "But the fire quickly spread and then we heard explosions," he added.

By then, the town's seven firemen were helpless in containing the blaze.

Initial damage assessment by the Office of the Mayor showed that among those destroyed were 21 general merchandise blocks, two pharmacies, four pawnshops, two hardware stores, four bakeries, and all the refreshment, fish, meat, vegetable, rice, fruit and dry goods sections.

Also destroyed were four LPG stalls, a computer café, a multipurpose cooperative stall, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone and Islacom calling stations, agriculture and agrivet sections, an appliance center and two optical business sections, among other establishments.

Among the victims was Vice Mayor Paciente Fuentes, whose hardware store was razed.

Like Bagolor, Tubigon Mayor Paulo Lasco refused to issue any statement on the probable cause of the fire.

He said the municipal government was still preoccupied with the clearing of debris. "We will allow the vendors to install make-shift stalls (near the fire scene)," he added.

Lasco admitted that most of the owners assign people to sleep in their stalls to prevent burglaries.

Most of the stalls in the market, which was built in 1923 and occupied nearly one hectare of land, were made of light materials.

Tubigon is a third-class municipality where Bohol's second busiest port behind Tagbilaran is located.

About 53 km north of the city, Tubigon has a population of 40,000 and boasts of an annual income of P33 million.

Chito Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

STOP MEDIA HARASSMENT!

BUTUAN CITY journalists and their supporters march toward city hall to protest the closure of a local radio station and the printing facilities of a tabloid.

FRANKLIN CALIGUID/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Mayor shuts down critical radio station

By Franklin A. Caliguid
PDI Mindanao Bureau

BUTUAN CITY—Mayor Daisy Plaza has ordered the closure of Bombo Radyo dxBR here for alleged violations of city ordinances.

Plaza issued the order after shutting down last week the printing facilities of the Mindanao Newswatch tabloid, which, like the Bombo Radyo station, has been very critical of her administration.

The mayor refused to talk with the INQUIRER, but in a statement, she said Bombo was not following the law.

She said the station failed to comply with requirements, such as an environmental compliance certificate, breached the city's zoning ordinance, and failed to renew its temporary permits.

Militant groups and Church-based organizations here said Plaza was "arrogantly (using) her power to harass media outfits critical of her failure to institute drastic reforms in the city government."

Gene Prisco, spokesperson of the party-list Bayan Muna in Caraga, said that because of her alleged abuse, it was not remote that Plaza, like her ally Joseph Estrada, will be ousted.

Some 2,500 people, including church members, students, squatters, Bombo supporters and residents staged an anti-Plaza protest on Friday after Plaza ordered the closure of the Cristal Press.

The Mindanao Newswatch has been running stories about the mayor's alleged corrupt practices and misdeeds in public office.

Fr. Ben Alforque, spokesperson of the Promotion of Church People's Response–Caraga, said the protests would end in Plaza's ouster.

In her statement, Plaza said her decision was prompted by Bombo's alleged unfair treatment of her.

"Bombo had violated my right to privacy by fabricating news against my person and political allies and inciting people to rise against the government," she said.

Norberto Pagaspas, radio station manager, described Plaza's closure order as "desperate" and "dictatorial," and indicated that the mayor was determined to stifle press freedom.

He, however, vowed to go on with their daily broadcasts, saying their lawyers were preparing to seek relief from the court.

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162 Pampanga inmates go on hunger strike

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—A total of 162 inmates of the provincial jail staged a hunger strike on Tuesday to protest inadequate and, at times, rotten food served them by jail administrators.

Prison guards said it was the first indignation rally held inside the more than 200-year-old Spanish mansion-turned-jail.

The 146 male and 16 female prisoners quietly walked out of their cells at about 10 a.m. Tuesday and, once assembled at the middle of the jail's tightly secured yard, dumped that day's supplies of uncooked fish, chicken meat, rice, vegetables and condiments.

With still empty stomachs, they sat around the heap, which by past noon already smelled foul.

Several times, they clapped their hands in unison to demand change.

"We can't take it anymore," said Gerry Serrano, 37, as he pasted protest posters made out of old calendars on the yard's wall.

Like the rest of the prisoners, he depends entirely on food ration from the provincial government.

Half of food ration

Angelina Flake-Cunan, the food supplier since August last year, has been distributing less than 50 percent of the P30 worth of daily food budget for each inmate, Amador Guevarra, another prisoner, told the INQUIRER.

Each inmate is allotted only P10 per meal, it was learned.

Guevarra, like other ward leaders in each of the jail's eight cells, kept a daily record of supplies received from Cunan to prove they were being shortchanged.

Senior Supt. Rodolfo Quilala, new provincial warden, did not order a dispersal of the protesters, explaining that the complaint was valid since there had never been an increase in the food budget in the last 15 years.

Cunan denied cheating on the inmates but admitted having difficulty because of the meager budget.

Less than 10 percent of prisoners subsist on what their families bring them, Quilala said.

Maggots, too?

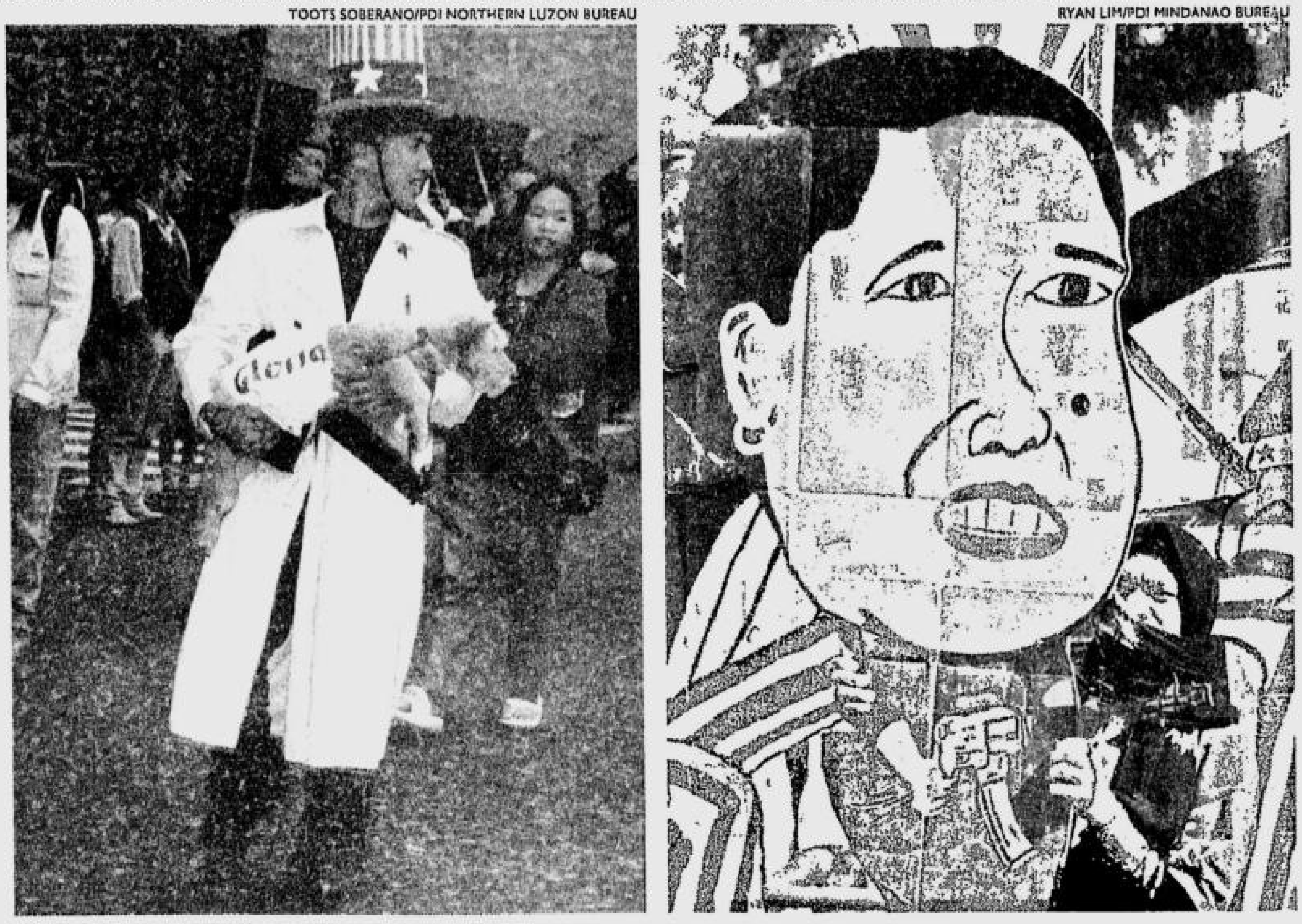
"There are days when smoked fish have maggots in them," said a male prisoner. The others agreed, giving the same account to reporters who covered the protest.

Pork—a small, thin slice for each inmate—is supplied only once a week, the prisoners said.

Serrano, who has been in jail for seven years now, said things were better under Cunan's sister, the jail's former food supplier.

Guevarra said the protest would go on until the provincial government agrees to their proposal to create a committee that would do the food purchase on behalf of the prisoners.

"Our imprisonment, which is already an ordeal for many of us, does not take away our right to enjoy humane treatment," Guevarra said.


TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

ANTI-'BALIKATAN'
Militant groups commemorate the Filipino-American War with rallies against the ongoing "Balikatan" war exercises involving Filipino and American soldiers. In Baguio City (left), a protester carries a toy gun and a dog symbolizing President Macapagal's alleged subservience to US interests. At right photo, an effigy of the President was displayed at the Rizal Park in Davao City, which was later burned.

Gunmen attack Cotabato hospital; 1 patient killed

PIKIT, North Cotabato—Gunmen fired at a private hospital here Monday night, leaving a patient dead and his attending physician wounded.

More than an hour earlier, the same gunmen shot dead a farmer and wounded another in an interior village of Nalapaan, also in Pikit.

Maj. Julieto Ando, speaking for the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said patient Eduardo Tere was killed when two Armalite rifle-wielding men on board a motorcycle fired at the Llaguno Medical Clinic in Poblacion Pikit at 9:30 p.m.

Dr. Ely Llaguno, clinic owner and resident physician, was hit by stray bullets in the body.

Ando said Llaguno was in critical condition and was brought to Davao City for special medical attention.

At 8 p.m., two gunmen, also armed with Armalite rifles and riding on a motorbike, fired at a house in Barangay Nalapaan, killing farmer Makapuda Dayao, 40 and wounding Madin Ditoon, 54.

The victims were about to sleep when the gunmen opened fire.

Responding government soldiers from the Army's 40th Infantry Battalion rushed the victims to a hospital.

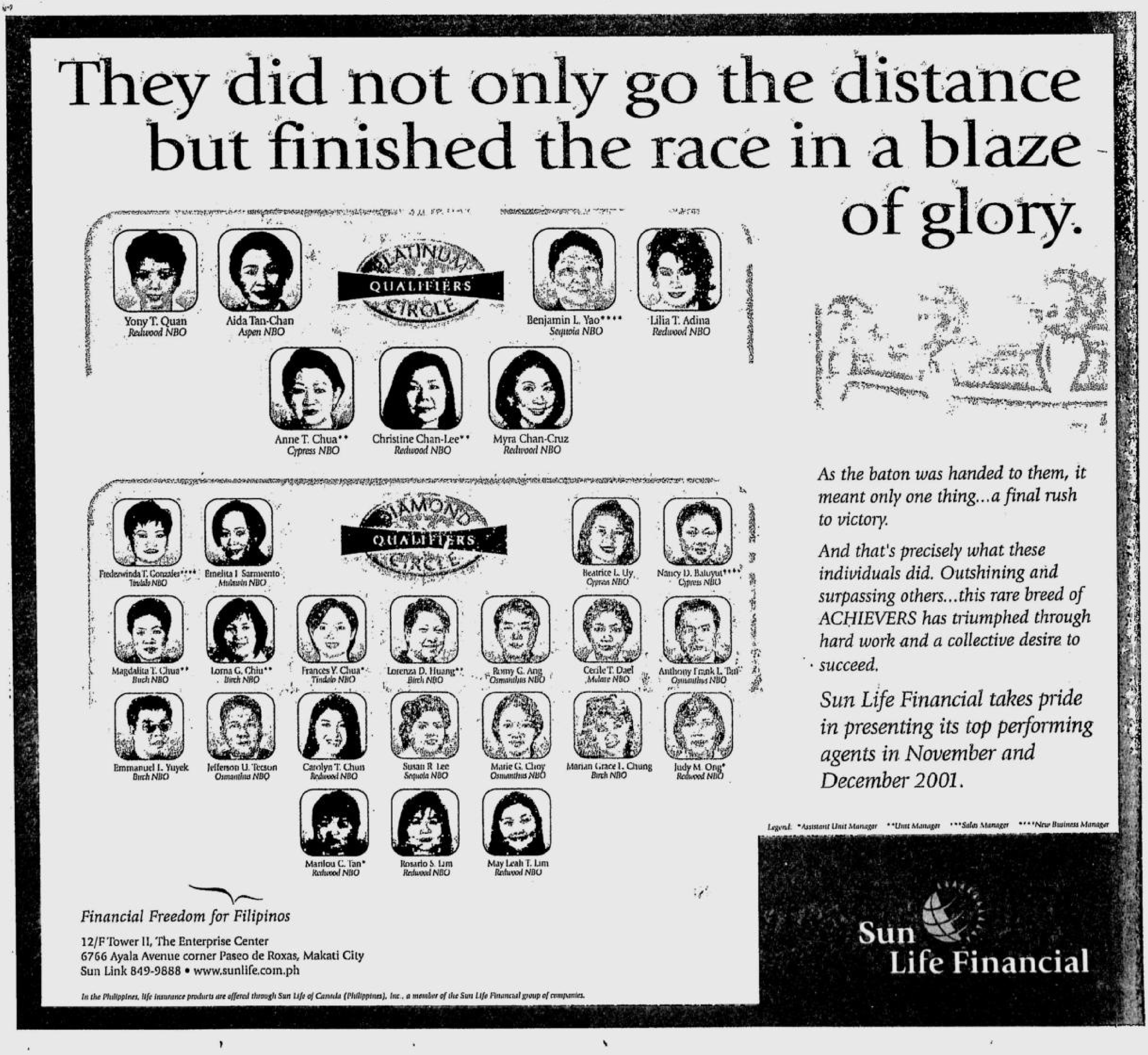
Ando said the two incidents could be related and that the assailants thought the survivor in Nalapaan was brought to the Llaguno Clinic.

In Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat, a dozen gunmen on Monday held up at least four vehicles and divested passengers of cash and valuables amounting to P100,000.

Ando said the holdup men, armed with assault rifles, flagged down three L-300 vans and a fish delivery car at the boundary of Palimbang and Maitum in Sarangani and ordered their occupants to yield their cash and other personal belongings.

Sinfuedo Aninag, driver of one of the vans, said they pulled over, believing that the men in fatigue uniforms and armed with M-203, M-14 and M-16 rifles were government troops, at about 4:45 a.m.

"We were ordered to disembark and, at gunpoint, demanded to hand over to them our cash, jewelry pieces and other valuables," Aninag said. ***Edwin Fernandez and Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



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INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

Jun Bandayrel, Editor ■ Rolando B. Fernandez, Bureau Chief

Bolinao fish kill: What went wrong?

By Yolanda Fuertes
Bolinao, Pangasinan

A DISASTER waiting to happen" could best describe the massive fish kill that hit the fish culture industry in Bolinao, Pangasinan, last week.

The same disaster hit Binmaley town several years ago and Dagupan City last year, and from their experiences, Bolinaoans could have learned the painful lesson that this disaster could bring.

However, residents and local officials were confident that compared to the rivers of Binmaley and Dagupan, Bolinao's sea is too wide to be affected by pollution caused by the aquaculture industry itself.

They were wrong.

Bolinao's fish culture industry started sometime in 1997, recalled Margaret Celeste, an environmental activist who led the battle against a proposed cement plant complex in the town several years ago.

"There were only a few fishery structures back then but already, there was apprehension among the fishermen and other stakeholders that if not controlled, the fish culture industry would rear its ugly head and turn against us," Celeste said.

In that year, Mayor Jesus Celeste formed a technical working group—composed of representatives from the local government, nongovernment organizations and the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, fishermen and residents—to work on the town's coastal development plan. The plan was approved in 1999.

Multiple-use zones

Under the plan, the municipal waters of Bolinao were classified into eco-tourism, fishery management, trade and navigational and multiple-use zones.

It is in the multiple-use zone that fishery structures, such as cages and pens, were established. The maximum size of each structure and the distance between them were specified in the plan.

However, when residents and businessmen from other towns saw how the few fish pen operators made a neat profit, all the plan's beautiful intentions and cautions were ignored.

"The structures literally mushroomed all over the place. The industry was then vaunted as a source of income to the residents and taxes to the local government. There was a feeling among the residents that, 'See? We don't need any pollutant industry in our town. We have enough resources to keep our economy going,'" Celeste said.

Fish Kill Site
Bolinao
PANGASINAN
Dagupan
Lingayen

INQMAP: ESambo

But deep inside, she and those who crafted the coastal plan had their own apprehensions. They somehow predicted that if the fish culture industry was not controlled, pollution could occur and might affect the town's coral reef system.

She said it was the local government that must strictly implement the plan. But local officials, many of whom are fish structure owners, have become lenient in giving permits to the operators, she said.

There have been fish kills since the fish cages and pens started sprouting in Bolinao, but these have been minor incidents that hardly made a dent on the operators' pockets.

Huge earnings from the fish culture industry emboldened the operators to build more cages. People from other provinces were lured by the industry until the spaces in Bolinao's sea allotted for fishery structures were all occupied.

"There were enough warning from scientists and the stakeholders. But local officials turned a deaf ear," Margaret Celeste said.

Records of the Lingayen Gulf Coastal Area Management Commission showed that 600 fish pens and 467 fish cages were built in Bolinao. Of the fish cages, 353 are in Guiguiwanen, the village hit by the massive fish kill last week.

The number goes beyond the carrying capacity of the Bolinao rivers, as pointed out by UPMSI Director Gil Jacinto in a letter to Mayor Celeste. The UPMSI maintains a marine laboratory in the town.

In his letter, Jacinto cited the Fishery Code (Republic Act No. 8550) which said only 10 percent of suitable water surface can be used for aquaculture using pens, cages and traps.

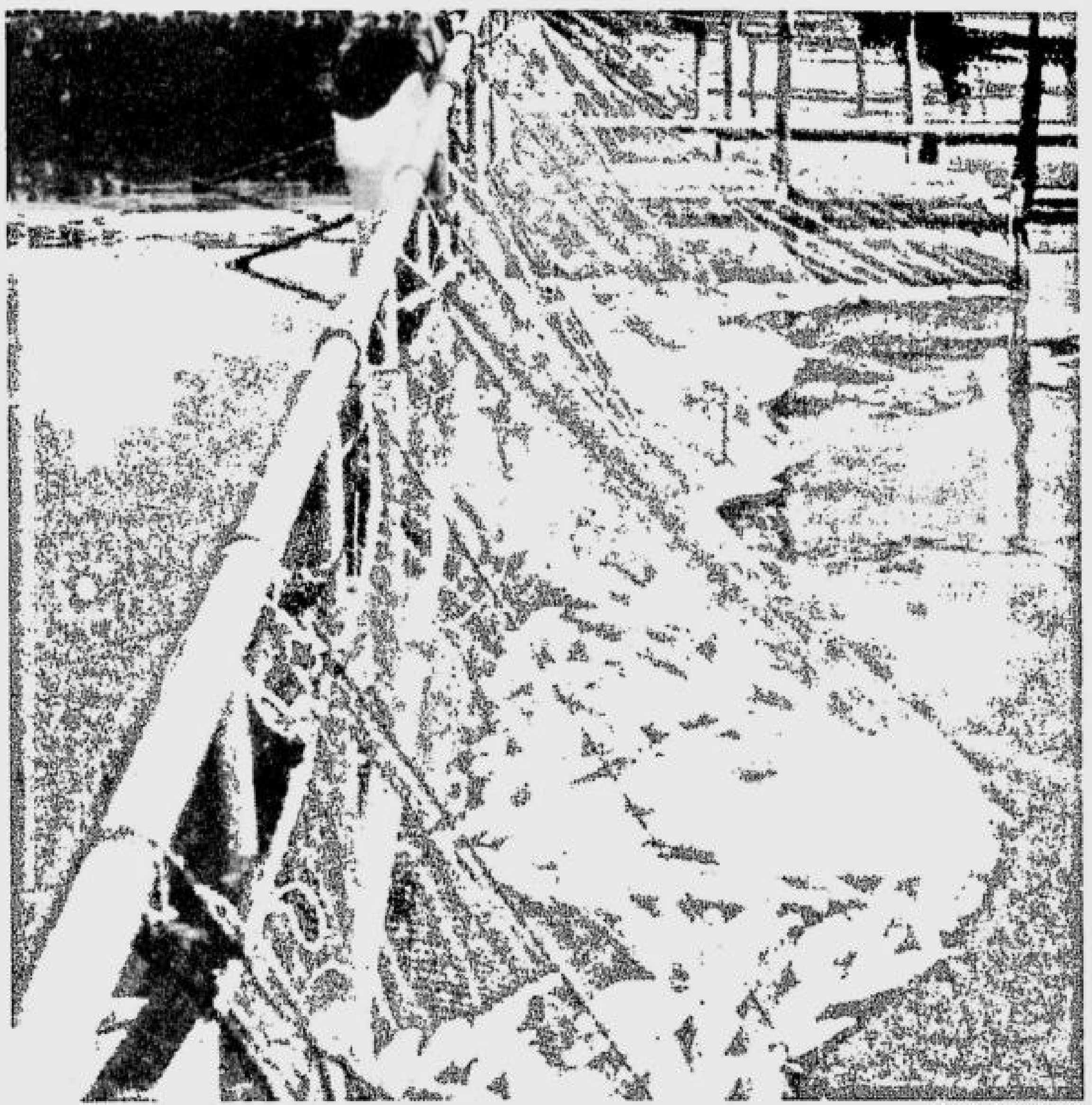
It also said the stocking density and feeding requirement should be controlled and determined by the water's carrying capacity.

"Obviously, the scale of development (in Bolinao) now exceeds and goes beyond the areas that have been identified in the development plan. Moreover, indications are that the carrying capacity of the area for the designated uses has already been exceeded," Jacinto said.

He asked Celeste to look into the problem and take steps to rationalize and control the proliferation of fish cages and pens.

"We certainly want the (town) to prosper and grow, with its people reaping benefits from its natural resources. Evidently, mariculture is one important strategy to attain this. (The town) has the prospect of demonstrating to the country and the world how mariculture can be sustainably pursued," he added.

The UPMSI's ongoing marine researches were earlier affected by pollution suspected to be from the aquaculture operations. Abalone brood stock and juveniles at the Bolinao marine laboratory had died, causing serious setbacks in the development of culture techniques of the species.



YOLANDA FUERTES

DEAD "bangus" are separated from the surviving ones through a net in the fish cage.

Marie Antonette Juinio-Menez of the UPMSI raised alarm over reports of fish kills, not only in the pens and cages but also in the adjacent reef areas that, she said, were becoming more frequent and widespread.

Celeste also asked the municipal council to look into the matter and the council held a public hearing on the aquaculture industry on Jan. 30.

On Feb. 1 or two days later, *bangus* in the fish cages started to gasp for air and then floated dead. Some operators were lucky because they were able to harvest their stocks. Others were not.

And when figures came in, the damage was pegged at P400 million.

Many operators, especially those who borrowed money for *bangus* inputs from banks and suppliers, were literally crying. But somehow, by not obeying the laws of nature, the aquaculturists had it coming.

Human greed

"It's human greed," said Celeste. "They kept on constructing cages and pens."

Westly Rosario, chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources center in Dagupan, said it was the fish bio-mass that killed the fish. The uncontrolled number of cages could no longer be supported by the carrying capacity of the water.

"Too many fish means too much organic load left in the water," Rosario explained.

A day after the massive fish kill occurred, Rosario tested the water quality in the aquaculture areas. He discovered that the dissolved oxygen content ranged from 1.2 to 2.3 parts per million (ppm), way below the normal 5 ppm. He said fish could still survive at 3 ppm.

"At 2 ppm, fish can live but will not eat, so they will eventually die," he said.

Dissolved oxygen was depleted because of algal bloom. Too much organic load in the water causes planktons (microscopic animals and plants) to proliferate, consuming dissolved oxygen and leaving nothing for the fish.

"Organic matters that come from the fish feed serve as fertilizer for the planktons, boosting their growth. These planktons compete with the fish, which has low tolerance level and which usually loses (the competition for oxygen)," Rosario explained.

He estimated that 30 percent of fish feed used by operators were not eaten by *bangus*.

"Even if you get only half of that, or only 15 percent, imagine the organic matter that is thrown into the water, and ultimately, the seabed," he explained.

Another cause of the fish kill could be the sudden rainfall that affected the water temperature, he said.

Fishermen say sudden temperature change can kill the fish. But the rain did not affect the salinity in the area as it was a normal 34-35 parts per thousand when the BFAR sampled the water.

Water in most barangays has turned reddish gray. It could only be a matter of time before it is hit by fish kills, Rosario said.

Malcolm Sarmiento, BFAR director, has formed a crisis management group to help clean the municipal waters of the decaying *bangus*.

The group will also help the Bolinao government come up with a plan to avert similar disasters in the future.

Holding the air longer than the whistleblowers

By Frank Cimatu
Vigan City

WHISTLEBLOWERS, by their nature, attract a lot of attention. Some lucky ones, like former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, can topple governments and be known as fathers of revolutions.

But what about the people who can hold the air longer than the whistleblowers? Those who have decided to make it their mission to rid the world of graft, corruption and other perceived evils, including, as it turned out, "whistleblowers."

Nestor Segismundo, for example, recalled being left out during their Christmas party at the Ilocos Sur office of the Department of Agrarian Reform.

No one would talk to Segismundo, who describes himself as a mere clerk of the DAR, during the office party.

"Not even a wish for long life," he joked.

Segismundo is the president of the Save Ilocos Sur Alliance (Sisa), which is giving Singson sleepless nights.

Segismundo and Sisa have attracted a lot of attention in the media by filing graft and plunder cases against the former governor. By their careful use of the media, they have shown that Sisa, unlike the deranged, caring mother in Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere," is not crazy after all.

Erap's enemies

For one, Singson has begun to be irritated by them, calling the group and its officials "puppets" of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"We have been Erap's enemies before the (former) governor turned his back against his drinking buddy. When the provincial government supported Concord (Constitutional Correction for Development), we were already against it," Segismundo said.

Singson also said Sisa was riding on the Catholic Church, citing that the group was known earlier as the socially concerned *Simbaan Sangkarubaan* (The Church is your Neighbor).

"That is understandable because three of the original Sisa members came from the Church," he said.

Sisa, which was formed in October 1999, was first known by its acronym that meant Bisaleg or "stomachache."

The original members included Segismundo, B.J. Ponce of the Tricycle Operators Association, engineer Niño Tablada, Nori Arcaina of the Times Employees Union, lawyer Jesse Vizcarra of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and Benedict Bersamira of the Alab-Katipunan.

When Singson came out in his first press conference in October 2000 alleging that Estrada was the "lord of all jueteng lords," some Bisaleg members tied red and blue ribbons at the provincial capitol to remind Ilocos Sur that Singson was one of the alleged jueteng lords.

"Singson, at that time, fought for transparency, clean government and sobriety. We hoped then that Singson would also be referring to his province," Segismundo said.

It was a tense moment for Bisaleg then. As a correspondent covering the group at that time, I recalled interviewing one of the founders and his mother would bring out his children, crying to tell him that they "don't want a dead father."

"I guess this thing is all off the record," I told him and he agreed.

Understandably, Bisaleg did not fly off the ground.

"If ever, the impeachment hearings were a great lesson for Ilocos Sur, showing them the need to fight for their rights," Segismundo recalled.

LEONCIO BALBIN JR.

SISA president Nestor Segismundo and counsel Estelita Cordero lead the protest actions against former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

No pansy

But Segismundo, probably the bravest man in Ilocos Sur next to Singson, was no pansy.

He was an activist in Manila, marching with the slain student leader Lean Alejandro in the 1980s. He was expelled from his school and continued his studies at the University of Northern Philippines (UNP) in Ilocos Sur.

His first confrontation with Singson was when the governor tried to rename UNP as the Elpidio Quirino University.

"It was a trivial matter but we have to stand by tradition," he said.

After Bisaleg, Segismundo used his fraternity connections and contacted lawyer and fraternity sister Estelita Cordero of the IBP.

Cordero agreed to become Sisa's legal counsel, and the great battle ensued.

Sisa has so far filed four graft cases, including a plunder charge, against Singson and his cohorts.

On Nov. 21 last year, they filed a case involving the "ghost" purchase of a P9.5-million backhoe loader. Five days later, they filed charges against Singson for an allegedly overpriced parcel of land worth P26 million in 1998.

In December, Sisa charged Singson with alleged technical malversation of a P30-million fund sourced from the tobacco excise taxes.

As an early Christmas treat to Singson, Sisa later charged him with plunder before the Ombudsman for allegedly misusing P1.2-billion in public funds through illegal disbursements and anomalous contracts.

All throughout, the fear among the Sisa members became too real.

On Oct. 3 last year, provincial auditor Agustin Chan Jr. "texted" a radio announcer, who had been supporting Sisa, and claimed that he had some goods on Singson.

The next day, Chan and his driver were shot and killed in an ambush in Bantay town while they were on their way to the regional audit office in La Union.

In December last year, the boarding house of a woman announcer sympathetic to Sisa was strafed. There was a text message circulating among Sisa members that eight more would be killed, but the founders are taking it all in stride.

Part of fight

Former Vigan Vice Mayor Liborio Arca said threats were part of the struggle to clean the government. A shy veterinarian who would rather inoculate pigs in the countryside than become involved, Arca decided to become one of the signatories in the P1.2-billion graft charge against Singson.

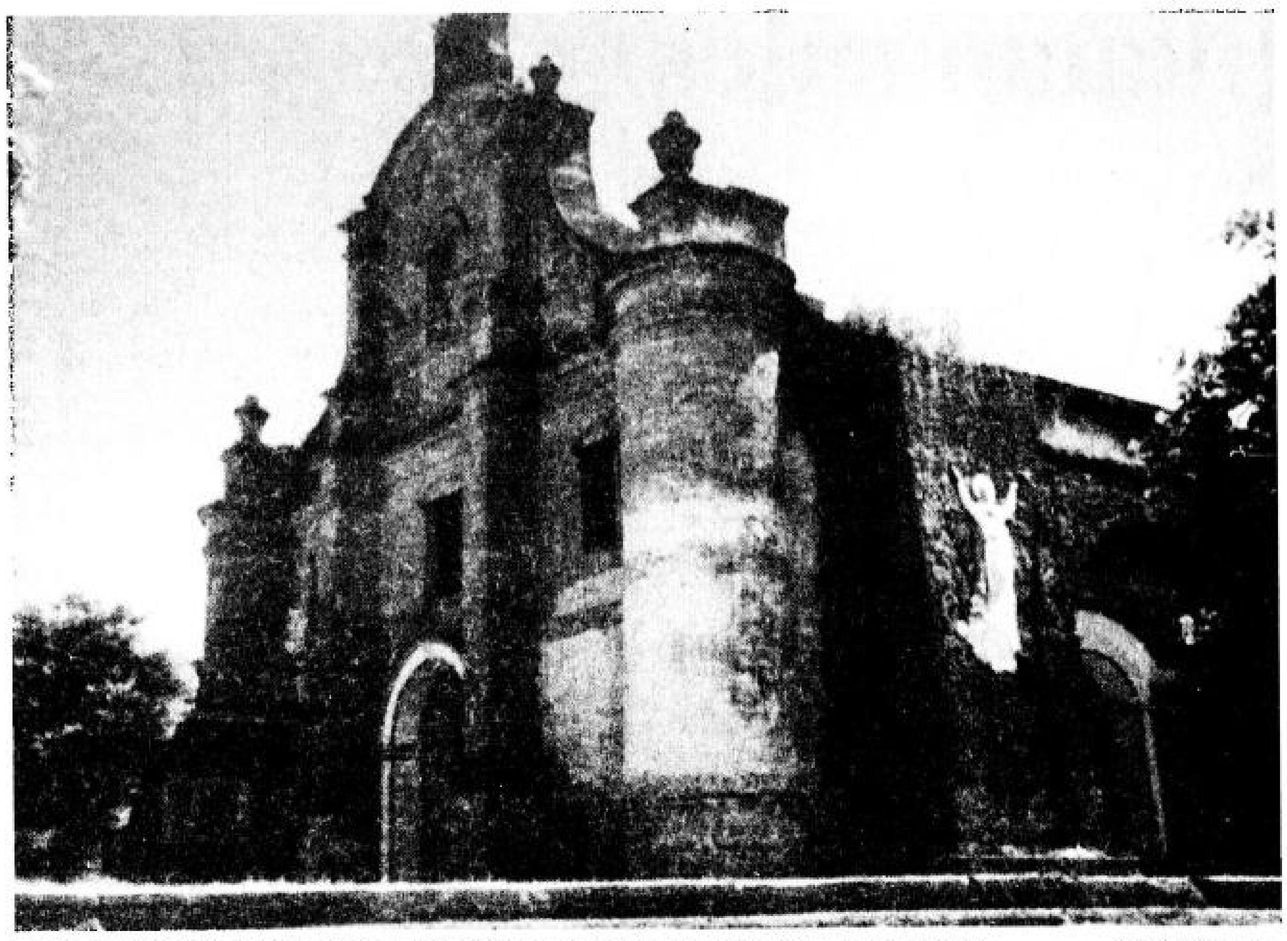
"Some (journalists) here have been telling me that they are only carrying the fight because of our fearlessness. They don't know it's just a brave front we are bringing out," Segismundo said.

Sisa claims to have more than 10,000 members in the province, the bulk of which are members of the Community Information and Assistance (CIA), a grassroots-based group founded by Singson and former board member Efren "Rambo" Rafanan Sr.

Rafanan was a radio announcer of Commando Radio, which created the cult personality of Singson.

He ran for governor last year against the wishes of Singson, and Singson has been blaming

HOLDING/p.15



THE SANTA Maria Church in Ilocos Sur: National landmark and Unesco heritage site. LEONCIO BALBIN JR.

Ilocos Sur treasure is also a tourist attraction

By Leoncio Balbin Jr.
Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur

THE SANTA Maria Church has all the potentials to attract tourists to Ilocos Sur. However, church officials lament that residents and local officials should join hands to promote it as an alternative tourist attraction in the province.

The church is a national historical landmark bestowed by the National Historical Institute. It is inscribed in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (Unesco) World Heritage List.

"They (people of Santa Maria) are holding a treasure but they do not realize it. They may realize the value of it but they are not using it," said Rev. Fr. Roque Reyes, Santa Maria parish priest and chair of the Archdiocesan Commission for Cultural Heritage.

The church, one of only four churches in the Philippines included in Unesco's heritage list, is strategically situated on top of a hill in Santa Maria's poblacion.

It provides a panoramic view of Santa Maria's verdant fields, the seven hills surrounding the town, the coastal villages and the Cordillera mountain ranges.

The church has three broad stairways—one coming from the eastern side where an abandoned cemetery is found, another from the southwest side at the back and the main stairway with 83 steps from the northwest side.

Reyes said the NHI allotted P2.5 million for the church's maintenance last year, but it was reduced to P250,000.

"Their reason for the reduction was that the budget was used in the ongoing Mindanao battle," he said, referring to the military campaign against Moro rebels in Mindanao.

The municipal government, according to Reyes, has not extended substantial support for the church's maintenance.

He said it was only Unesco that has been consistent in extending its technical know-how in the preservation and improvement of the church.

"No less than Richard Engelheart, Unesco regional director for culture in Asia, came to see the status of the church," Reyes said.

The church was forced to sell part of its lot in front to sustain efforts for the preservation.

Reyes said the church could bring income from local and foreign tourists.

"It needs promotions, development, creativity and imaginations to tap the church's huge potentials for tourism," he said. "The people certainly realize it but many of them are busy working to support their existence."

The parish was established on April 25, 1765 with the first baptismal record signed in 1767. It served as a station of the Augustinian missionaries in 1822 on their way to evangelize people of nearby Abra.

The first parish priest was Fray Jose Cuadrado, OSA. The original "*ermita*" (hermitage) of the small village was in Sitio Bulbulala in Barangay Maynganay Norte.

As the community grew, a twin chapel was built at the center of the town in the present location of the poblacion.

The construction of the church began in 1810 apparently to honor the wishes of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Locals said the 1769 image of the Virgin would periodically appear at the foot of a large guava tree growing at the spot where the main altar now stands.

Heavenly hint

The people saw it wise to follow the "heavenly hint" and transferred the church to the top of the hill.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is known in Ilocandia as Apo Asunta or Asuncion, Apo Caridad, Apo Esperanza, Apo Carmen, Apo Rosario and La Immaculada Concepcion.

The church has a 112-cm wooden statue of the Virgin Mary. The image's face and hands are made of ivory.

The Santa Maria Church was designated as a national historical landmark on Sept. 26, 1982 and inscribed in the Unesco World Heritage List on Dec. 11, 1993.

The church, together with the fortress-like Miag-ao Church in Iloilo, the Paoay Church in Ilocos Norte and the San Agustin Church in Manila, was cited by Unesco as a classic example of Philippine baroque architecture.

A horse show in Year of the Horse

HOMETOWN
Snapshot

THE TAM-AWAN artists have managed to outrun all others, cramming 33 horses in their new Village Gallery in Baguio City.

BenCab, the internationally famous artist and Tam-awan guru, has seven horses, elegantly rendered in Zen brush in his "Year of the Horse Studies." The P55,000 work is already reportedly bought by a Singapore-based newscaster.

But easily the most engaging are the works of **Willy Magtibay, Roland Bay-an** and **Ged Alangui**, who just came from the Asian group arts exhibition in Seoul.

Magtibay's "Ode to Ms Caballero" looks like a giant *ampao* (the red-and-gold envelope where you put your New Year *balato*) with the golden horses passing over like embers in red silk. Ms Caballero was a well-loved Panitikan teacher of Magtibay's in his St. Theresa High School days and he interspersed his work with lines about horses like "*Kabayong matulin, lumalangoy sa dilim.*"

The much-improved Bay-an has a horse, using a metal brush for its mane and carved horses for his "Tigidig."

Alangui's "Eight Horses" is reminiscent of the 1890s' flash photograph of a speeding horse.

Roger Bibal's "Kabajo" uses actual horseshoes and a tail while **Jojo Almeda**'s huge "Year 2002" is a great gift to the Horse people.

Rishab's "Dream Horse" is also a great gift to Deedee of Cartoon Network's "Dexter's Laboratory" fame and other cultists of the white unicorn.

Paulo Sunggay's "Anak ng Kabayo" is an almost literal rendering of the "*nangangabayo*" done in pseudo-cubism.

Frank Cimatu

Holding . . .

(From page 14)

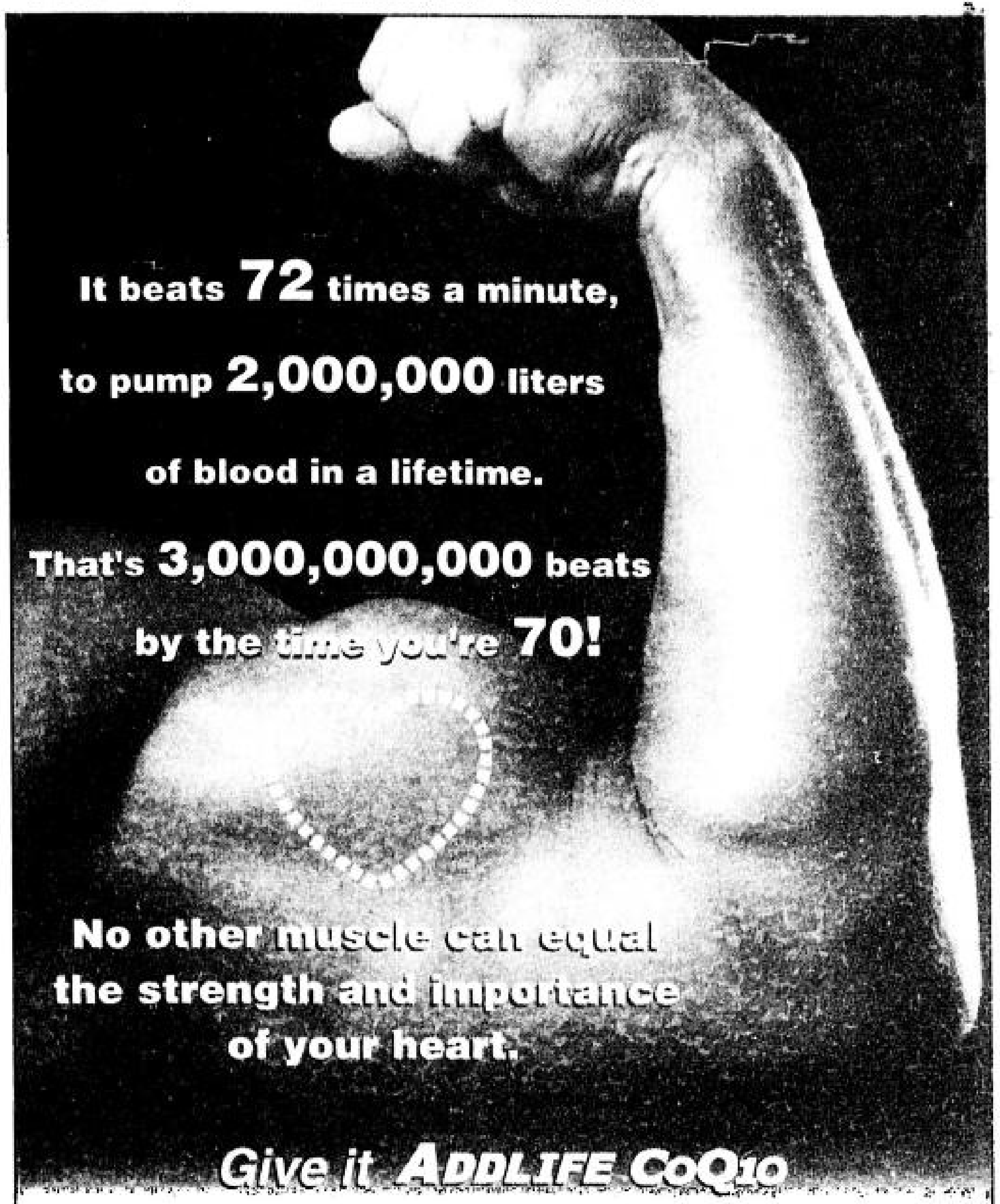
Rafanan as among the figures behind Sisa.

But Segismundo said Rafanan was still reluctant to join Sisa but many of his members have silently supported the group.

Most of the CIA members are farmers, who now form Sisa's mass base.

"The battle has now become serious," Arca said.

As for the threats on their lives, Segismundo mouthed Singson's trademark sound byte: "*Patay kung patay!* We can die now but we already are part of history. You can't take that away from us."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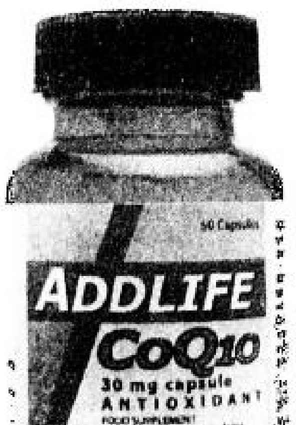

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0047, Series of 2002

Cabinet approves Balikatan rules

From page A1

tionality of the US military presence, but he subsequently bowed to the opinion of the Department of Justice that the President as chief architect of foreign policy would approve the Balikatan.

The TOR, which both Guingona and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez described as having been ironed out, was formally presented to the Cabinet oversight committee in Malacañang at 4 p.m. yesterday.

"It's finished already and will be forwarded to the President," Golez said in a chance interview with Malacañang reporters.

Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan yesterday said the military was waiting for the President's approval of the TOR.

But Guingona was categorical in stating that he would sign it. "I will," he told Palace reporters while aboard his vehicle after his one-on-one discussion with the President following the regular Cabinet meeting.

"Everything has been resolved," he said. "We're waiting for a conference with our counterparts from the US. The conference will be a teleconference, or somebody will be sent here depending on their side."

Guingona said he had incorporated his "inputs" into the TRO. He refused to provide details, saying that would mean "telegraphing our punches already."

At his regular press briefing, Tiglao pointed out that the President's signature was not legally required for the TOR be cause the Balikatan was just another exercise under the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

"(But) my point is that since it has generated a lot of interest compared to Balance Piston, she might, upon advice of her counsel, emphasize the fact that she's responsible for it. So she might sign it," he said, adding:

"We're still awaiting word from the legal counsel."

Balance Piston is the regular joint exercise between Philippine and American forces. It is now being conducted in Luzon.

Tiglao declined to categorically comment on Guingona's assertion that he would sign the TOR for the Philippines. Tiglao said he did not know whether the Vice President had been officially delegated to do so.

In a previous interview, Tiglao said AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes would sign the TOR.

Golez said in a separate interview that both sides had reviewed the document, and "we have to go through the process of approving it."

Echoing Adan's statement the other day, Golez said the provisions being questioned by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon had been part of the TOR that covered previous RP-US military exercises.

The provision authorizing American commanders to act unilaterally to defend their forces from threats "has been there since the start, when Senator Biazon was AFP chief of staff," Golez said.

VFACom

There was also initial confusion regarding the inter-agency body formed on Jan. 17, 2000, to ensure that Philippine and US troops comply with VFA provisions during joint military exercises.

Interviewed upon her return from overseas, the President defended her Executive Order 67 that clipped Guingona's powers over the body by saying she should have greater say in it.

"Remember, the name of the office is the Presidential Commission on the VFA (VFACom), she told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. "Now what is a presidential commission if the Office of the President (OP) has no participation in it?"

She added, however, that Guingona would still serve as VFACom chair.

In EO 67 dated Jan. 22, Ms Macapagal recalled Guingona's authority to appoint the VFACom executive director. She said she would appoint a senior official from the OP as executive director, who would report directly to her.

Earlier in the day, Guingona said he was not consulted prior to the issuance of EO 67 and would take up the matter with the President.

But when he emerged from his one-on-one discussion with her, he said "everything has been resolved."

"We're keeping my appointee (Jaime Yambao, former ambassador to Laos) because he's the one she wants also," the Vice President told Palace reporters while aboard his vehicle.

He said he would remain VFACom chair and Defense Secretary Reyes, co-chair.

"The President is keeping me as chair and I report directly to her because after all, the VFACom is a presidential commission," Guingona said.

As was the original setup, Guingona said Yambao would report directly to him.

"Yambao will report to the President through me or I can authorize Yambao to report directly to the President," Guingona said.

In EO 67, Ms Macapagal also cut down the membership of the VFACom from 10 to three.

"I streamlined it," she said. "I cut down the membership to only (the foreign secretary), the defense secretary and the social welfare secretary because my main concern (in the Balikatan) is that it doesn't give rise to prostitution."

Guingona yesterday said he was amenable to this reduction.

"The number of members has been reduced so that the (VFACom) can act more speedily and more swiftly," he said.

Asked to comment on reports that the President wanted to control information on the Balikatan, particularly on violations that might be committed by the US troops, Guingona said: "Let us not exacerbate the issue. It has been resolved."

'Intelligence fusion'

The President has designated a top-level team to work out the "intelligence fusion" with Jordan as part of the war against international terrorism.

Golez said he and Cesar Garcia, Jr., director general of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, would soon leave for Jordan to personally meet King Abdullah II in connection with this matter.

The monarch offered Ms Macapagal information regarding terrorist cells when they met at the sidelines of the recent World Economic Forum in New York.

"He asked me to send the head of my intelligence so they can work out the intelligence fusion arrangements," the President said in her arrival speech yesterday.

Golez told Malacañang reporters that the Philippines would benefit from Jordan's intelligence inputs because of that country's "experience in tracking down terrorists."

"It is very much needed," he said. "Intelligence is the best weapon in fighting terrorism."

Abdullah earlier said that his country had been providing intelligence inputs to the United States and had decided to do the same for the Philippines.

Areas south of the Philippines are one of those identified as havens of terrorist cells identified with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network. ***With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Christine Herrera and Martin P. Marfil***

John O accuses Camacho of conspiracy

From page A1

against him," Bernardo said.

The Commission on Appointments has not confirmed Camacho as legislators continue to question his involvement in the flotation of the Peace bonds.

Osmeña said a letter dated Aug. 9, 2001 from Code-NGO, a non-government group headed by Socorro "Marissa" Camacho-Reyes, to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that the finance secretary was involved in the deal that already set the amount and interest rate.

The senator pointed out the Reyes had conveniently dropped the name of her brother in the letter to the BSP. The letter spoke of a meeting between Code-NGO and the Bureau of Treasury "hosted by no less than Secretary Camacho himself."

He said that Reyes and Songco's letter, which was marked "rush," also asked for the inclusion of the bond flotation in the Monetary Board's agenda.

"The latter was dated Aug. 9 and the bond floatation was included in the agenda of the Monetary Board on the same day. And the Monetary Board approved the flotation on Aug. 9," Osmeña said.

"*Mabilis pa sa alas kwatro* (it was fast) because the order came from the sibling of the finance secretary," Osmeña said in a press conference.

He said the issuance of bonds for the benefit of a private group was against the law.

"The Constitution is very clear. No public fund shall be expended without an appropriation from Congress. They are violating the law in trying to use the capital market to rig a bond issue to make some money," Osmeña pointed out.

He said that Camacho could be liable for graft and that the committee will invite the finance secretary to explain.

At the continuation of the committee hearing on the alleged irregularities in the auction of the bonds, National Treasurer Sergio Edeza yesterday confirmed that Camacho was present during the meeting at the Department of Finance to discuss the issuance of the Peace bonds.

Danilo Songco, Code-NGO national coordinator, confirmed Edeza's statement, saying that the meeting was held at the DOF building so that Camacho and Edeza could be "apprised of the situation" involving the proposed Peace bonds.

In the Aug. 9, 2001 letter, Camacho's sister and Songco informed Bangko Sentral Gov. Rafael Buenaventura that the finance secretary had earlier "hosted" a meeting between officials of Code-NGO and the Bureau of Treasury.

But Songco was quick to point out that Camacho just attended the first portion of the meeting.

Conflict of interest

Camacho had been saying that he did not take part in the discussions on the Peace bonds due to a possible conflict of interest.

But Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta, author of the Senate resolution calling for the inquiry into the Peace bonds, said this was not so.

"What I find odd is why he has been claiming that he inhibited himself from any discussion on the Peace bonds when Treasurer Edeza himself, his sister Marissa and Mr. Songco are confirming that he even hosted one meeting at the DOF building to discuss this issue," Oreta said.

Edeza also informed senators that the Bureau of Treasury had agreed to several Code-NGO proposals that in effect allowed it to corner the sale of the Peace bonds through the RCBC and earn for itself P1.8 billion in tax-free profits.

Among the concessions granted to Code-NGO was the implementation of the "19 Lender Rule" in the auction of the Peace bonds.

Under this scheme, the number of bidders was deliberately limited to 19 banks, although there were 38 Government Securities Eligible Dealers (GSED), so that the sale of the bonds could be exempted from the 20-percent withholding tax.

Edeza admitted that the Bureau of Treasury used this rule "just for tax exemption purposes."

But Oreta insisted that because of this scheme, the government lost P5 billion in potential revenue that could have been used to fund projects to help the poor, Code-NGO's beneficiary for funds that it could raise from Peace bonds.

After losing P5 billion in potential revenue, the government still has to pay P2.5 billion in interest every year for the sale of the zero-coupon instruments so that Code-NGO could raise P100 million yearly to sponsor anti-poverty projects, according to Oreta.

Dutch auction

Another peculiar feature of the Peace bonds, which Oreta raised, was the use of the "Dutch auction" rule in selling them instead of the normal procedure of spreading the sale to minimize the risks of the government.

Under the Dutch auction, a bidder can corner the purchase of a bond float as in the "winner-take-all" concept.

Oreta said she found it odd that the treasury bureau had to forego with the electronic billboard bidding system (EBBS), which ensures transparent bidding, in favor of a manual bidding

"These dubious features of the Peace bonds designed by Code-NGO showed that the bond float was seemingly stage-managed from the very start to guarantee for Code-NGO a P1.4 billion windfall without the group investing anything, save for its saliva and strong connections in government," Oreta said.

After the hearing, Osmeña said the testimony of Edeza "only strengthens the perception of the committee that the government rigged the bidding in favor of Code-NGO."

Osmeña said the committee would ask the Office of the Ombudsman to investigate a possible insider trading involving Code-NGO.

He said that if criminally liable, the Code-NGO must be compelled to return the full amount of P1.8 billion.

Senators said the deal favored RCBC and Code-NGO because the government made the bonds eligible for reserves and was exempted from the final 20-percent withholding tax.

Osmeña said these features were proposed by Camacho's sister.

He said the Senate would also investigate other transactions that the Department of Finance had been pursuing.

These include the P25-billion debt-to-equity conversion into Philippine National Bank, a planned securitization of the earnings from the Malampaya natural gas field, and the resolution of the government's obligations to Swiss import inspector SGS.

What are zero coupon bonds?

From page A1

to pay annually, or any other regular interval a certain interest rate until the maturity of the bond when the government will have to pay the P35 billion.

With zero-coupon bonds, the government borrows P35 billion but the actual amount it receives from the lenders is less than P35 billion (the face value). Thus, the lenders do not receive any interest regularly. But because they pay out less than the actual amount that would be paid back by the borrower at maturity, they do earn interest which can easily be calculated.

The government, through the Bureau of Treasury (BTR), regularly holds auctions to decide who is willing to lend to them at the lowest cost, specifically, the lowest interest rate.

Only government securities eligible dealers (GSED) accredited by the BTR, mostly banks, can participate in these auctions, which are done electronically and are designed to accept the lowest rates under a cut-off set by Treasury and other government officials.

Another way to look at it is GSEDs are lenders to the government. GSEDs can make money by trading these bonds, by buying and selling them.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said that the BTR came up with the 10-year zero-coupon bonds because it realized there was a demand for the issue and so the government might get a good rate if it borrowed by issuing such instruments.

Edeza disclosed that the BTR received proposals for 10-year zero-coupons not only from Caucus of Development for NGO Networks or CODE-NGO but from several other banks as well.

CODE-NGO, in its proposal to the government, aimed to raise P1 billion for microfinance and other poverty alleviating projects by buying 10-year zero coupon bonds, which they called PEACE bonds and selling them for a profit.

CODE-NGO had proposed the issue to the Department of Finance (DOF) early last year or several months before Camacho became finance secretary mid-June.

Special features

On its own initiative, CODE-NGO batted for and got a favorable opinion from the Bureau of Internal Revenue, which like the BTR is under the supervision of the DOF, for the debt instruments.

In the BIR opinion, the proposed bonds would be exempt from withholding tax.

The NGO was also able to secure an approval in principle from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas that the proposed bonds would be eligible as reserve requirement and as compliance with the agri-agra law.

This eligibility for reserves added value to the bonds because other government securities eligible for reserves had very low interest rates.

While CODE-NGO was lobbying the government for the issuance of the bonds and the tax-exempt and eligibility features, it was working out an arrangement with Rizal Commercial Banking Corp (RCBC).

Based on Senate testimony and an interview with a top RCBC official, RCBC agreed March last year to purchase the proposed bonds on behalf of CODE-NGO, which could not purchase the bonds directly because it was not a GSED.

After getting the bonds, CODE-NGO would then sell the bonds to RCBC Capital Corp., the investment arm of RCBC at a lower rate in order to make a profit.

An RCBC official said that the bank made the agreement with CODE-NGO believing that only if the NGO were the buyer would the bonds, with its special features, be issued in the first place.

RCBC executive Valentin Bagatsing said that at that time they valued the bonds at 11 percent of face value.

Exclusive right

CODE-NGO itself admits that it wanted the exclusive right to purchase the bonds because it was the one that conceptualized them, did the research and talked to government officials in order to get the BIR and BSP rulings that give special value to the debt instruments.

Edeza, however, was determinedly against a negotiated sale of the bonds to RCBC/CODE-NGO.

He insisted on an auction and clarified with the BIR and BSP that the tax exemption and eligibility features of the planned 10-year, zero-coupon bonds could and would be applied regardless of the identity of the buyer.

Thus, he ensured that whoever won the bonds would enjoy the special features of tax exemption and reserve eligibility of the bonds.

Before the auction, he also published the features of the bonds in newspapers in order to allow market participants the same access to information as RCBC and be able to price their bids accordingly.

Auction

Edeza's decision to auction the bonds essentially made obsolete the need for anyone to tie up with CODE-NGO to secure the bonds for themselves.

In effect, the RCBC group could have acquired the bonds directly from the government and enjoyed their benefits without "subsidizing" CODE-NGO under the agreement to buy the bonds at a lower rate from the non-profit organization.

However, RCBC/RCBC Capital had already signed an agreement and could not back out, an RCBC official said.

On the day of the auction, RCBC submitted a bid of 12.75 percent for the bonds that translated to P10.169 billion against the face value of the bonds of P35 billion.

The rate is reportedly far lower than the next lowest bids that were around 14 percent.

Senators have criticized the sale of the bonds by pointing out that the government could have "saved" P1.4 billion (or P1.3 billion according to others), representing the 11 percent rate that RCBC Capital was willing to buy the bonds for from CODE-NGO.

Edeza, however, stressed that the government had nothing to do with any private agreement between lenders and third parties, specifically, the RCBC group and CODE-NGO.

As long as the auction was open to everybody, the government provided a level playing field.

Finally, a US envoy in RP

From page A1

troops would be taking part in a joint military exercise in Mindanao to assist Manila in fighting the Abu Sayyaf, which Washington has linked to Osama bin Laden's al Qaida network.

Ricciardone has served as senior adviser in the US State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs since 1999. His previous overseas assignments include serving as deputy chief of mission in Ankara, Turkey, and Amman, Jordan.

Taxpayer's suit

In Manila, the Supreme Court yesterday issued a full court resolution ordering Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, as alter ego of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes to justify the war games in Zamboanga City and Basilan.

In a one-page order signed by Assistant Clerk of Court Luisa D. Villarama, the respondents were given 10 days to comment on a taxpayer's suit filed last Friday by lawyers Arthur D. Lim and Paulino Ersando.

The two men, both former top officials of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, had asked the high court to stop the Balikatan, saying it would not only violate the Constitution but also lead to a "shooting war."

They had claimed that the Balikatan, although dubbed a joint military exercise, was actually a "continuing combat operation" by the Armed Forces of the Philippines against the Abu Sayyaf.

They had described the Abu Sayyaf as a bandit group composed only of Filipinos who had violated only Philippine laws.

"To unleash American GIs to subdue them, even under the cover of expanding the US-led war against global terror in the aftermath of (the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States), is not only an unmitigated insult against the Filipino soldier but also a negation of our self-respect as a people and a mockery of the Philippine Constitution," they had said.

Lim and Ersando are former IBP national president and former governor for Western Mindanao, respectively.

Impeachment

Militant groups have taken up the challenge posed by the President in describing their protests against the Balikatan as "all rhetoric."

Lawyer Poch Cinco IV, chair of the Professional Solidarity for Social Change, told a news conference in Cebu City that militant groups in Manila led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) were conducting "feasibility studies" on the possible filing of an impeachment case against Ms Macapagal for supposed treason.

Cinco said the President's statements had shown that the government was diverting the discussion on the real issue about the Balikatan.

"The real issue is, does this operation constitute an aggression to our sovereignty?" he said.

Bayan-Central Visayas chair Paul Rodriguez said their protest actions sprang from "substantive things" based on lessons from history.

"Maybe the President does not know what 'rhetoric' means,'" he said.

Rodriguez said the President committed treason in supposedly misleading the Filipino people on the real purpose of the Balikatan.

"But we have to make the studies to (ensure that) the (impeachment) charges we will file against her will (get the approval of Congress)," he said.

Rodriguez said the President lied on the real purpose of the Balikatan when she said it was just a joint military exercise between American and Filipino soldiers.

He said his group believed that the Balikatan was a military "operation" against the Abu Sayyaf.

"The US media even labeled the exercise as the opening of the second front on the war against terrorism," Cinco said.

In the opinion of Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran, the President's statement was an "unabashed show of puppetry to the US government and its anti-terrorist campaign, which stands to wreak death and further destruction all over the world."

Beltran agreed with Senate Minority Floor Leader Aquilino Pimentel's call for the President to explain to Congress the details of the Balikatan and the exact extent of the country's involvement in the US-led global war against terrorism.

"Malacañang and its agencies have not been up-front regarding the entire matter," Beltran said. "In fact, they have been doling out only the scantiest, most cryptic of details."

5-day rations

At Camp Cabunbata in the Basilan capital of Isabela, Filipino soldiers boasted they could survive on 5-day rations in the jungle up to two weeks but that it was not certain the Americans could do the same.

Nevertheless, officials of Cotabato province want the Americans to train Filipino soldiers and policemen in yet another challenging terrain—the marshy areas of Central Mindanao.

The proposed training area is home to forces of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which is negotiating peace with the government.

Capt. Harold Cabunoc, commander of the Army's 10th Scout Ranger Company, said only Filipino soldiers, and probably the Abu Sayyaf fighters, could endure staying for weeks or months in the jungle "without the comforts of life."

"We can last in jungle survival despite mosquitoes and leeches," he said in Filipino. "We can drink dirty water from a stream and even eat grass."

Cabunoc said Filipino soldiers were willing to share the technique with their American counterparts, "if they will be given the chance to join us in jungle operations in Basilan."

He said ingenuity was one thing Filipino soldiers were proud of, although he admitted that the capability of American forces would be a plus factor in military operations.

Maj. Renato Padua, commander of the 1st Scout Ranger Battalion, expressed doubt that the Americans, who he said were "too close to comfort," could survive in the jungles of Basilan.

"We do not doubt our own capability," he told the INQUIRER. "We might have a problem with the American soldiers. Our efforts might be focused, not on the operation, but on protecting them."

In Kidapawan City, Cotabato, Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said local executives wanted part of the Balikatan staged in central Mindanao "specifically near the Liguasan Marsh."

Piñol said copies of a resolution passed by the provincial peace and order council about two weeks ago had been sent to the President and Interior Secretary Jose Lina.

"We are hoping to get a positive response," he said.

But the MILF said the resolution was a product of Piñol's stance against the rebel group.

"I don't know what he will think about next," said Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson. ***Reports from Reuters; Michael Lim Ubac and Agnes E. Donato in Manila; Debra Jane Magallon, PDI Visayas Bureau; Julie S. Alipala, Rosa May V. de Guzman and Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Rosebud jumps into impeachment fray

By Christine Avendaño

WHEN the House committee on justice was voting on the first impeachment complaint against Ombudsman Aniano Desierto on Dec. 18 last year, Speaker Jose de Venecia was reportedly monitoring the process with Desierto.

"*Sabi ko sa 'yo, wag kang mag-worry. Ayan 35-5* (I told you, don't worry. There, 35-5)," De Venecia reportedly told Desierto during the Bulung Pulungan forum at the Westin Philippine Plaza held that day.

The source of the quote: Mary Ong, the controversial ex-undercover agent known as Rosebud, who happened to be sitting at the same table as de Venecia and Desierto.

The three were in the forum because they had been named among the country's top newsmakers for the year.

Ong told the INQUIRER that "it was impossible not to hear what De Venecia said."

She said that she was aware that they were talking about the House justice committee vote because "they were all talking about it" at the table.

"I was shocked because from there I knew he (De Venecia) was helping them," Ong said. Former President Fidel Ramos was seated to her left, she said. Also at the table were journalist Monica Feria, photojournalist Mandy Navasero and Bulletin reporter Aries Ilagan.

She said that De Venecia received many phone calls that time, giving her the impression that "he was running the show" on the committee vote. The committee voted 35 for and 5 against dismissal of the complaint for being insufficient in substance.

"I will stand by (my statement)," Ong said.

The INQUIRER sought De Venecia for comment, but his spokesperson said the Speaker may release a statement today.

But House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II released a statement last night saying it was "grossly wrong and unfair to accuse the Speaker of interfering in the impeachment process."

Gonzales said that the second impeachment complaint against Desierto has been referred to the House justice committee because of De Venecia's early transmittal of the complaint.

Two lawyers

Ong said she recounted the incident to her lawyer, Leonard de Vera, who must have told Ernesto Francisco, the lawyer who filed the first complaint against Desierto.

She said Francisco asked her about it.

Francisco said the incident showed that De Venecia was "favoring" Desierto in the impeachment proceedings against him.

"Speaker De Venecia's moves are highly suspect. Behind his public projection of keeping his hands off the impeachment charges and asking congressmen to adopt a 'conscience vote,' he is actually very interested in the dismissal of the impeachment charges against Ombudsman Desierto and, is in fact, favoring the latter," Francisco said in a statement he issued to House reporters.

"The problem with Speaker De Venecia is that he says one thing and does another. But the truth of the matter is that De Venecia is helping Desierto."

In his statement, Francisco also renewed his charge that De Venecia's move to have the House committee on good government immediately investigate the charges contained in the second impeachment complaint would preempt the complaint.

"Knowing it was an impeachment complaint, it was highly irregular for him to refer the charges contained therein to the Committee on Good Government," Francisco added.

But Gonzales said that Francisco must have misunderstood the matter, that the second impeachment complaint is being investigated by the House committee on good government as he stressed that what was being investigated by the body was the tax credit scam raised by Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno in his privilege speech last month.

De Venecia, he said, had called upon the House committee on good government to fast-track the investigation of the tax credit scam "to show that this House is not insensitive to the allegations in the second impeachment complaint."

He also said that the committee on oversight will now hear House Resolution No. 391 filed by the minority coalition, which seeks to investigate the tax credit scam.

Meanwhile, Feria confirmed to the INQUIRER that she was in the same event and was seated next to Ong during lunch and recalled that Desierto and Ramos did come to their table.

But Feria said she could not remember hearing De Venecia making such a statement to Desierto.

All she could remember, she said, was that De Venecia told the forum that Desierto was cleared in the House, apparently in reference to the outcome of the House justice committee vote.

'Committee did not give a damn about complaint'

From page A1

even considering the evidence submitted by the complainant, lawyer Ernesto Francisco.

The committee was "selective," Padilla said, because it used the affidavit of banker Luke Roxas, Francisco's client at the time of the alleged bribery, but not that of the lawyer.

Roxas' affidavit was given only to the committee secretary, but it was considered by the committee members when they voted 35-5 to dismiss the complaint, Padilla said. In contrast, Francisco's affidavit containing 13 pieces of evidence was rejected by the committee.

"The committee did not give a damn (about) the impeachment complaint," Padilla said.

"If the committee took pains to read the 13 documents, all of these (charges) could have been corroborated. But the problem is the committee was selective, it used the affidavit of Luke Roxas even if it was not time to do so," Padilla said.

But committee chair Rep. Marcelino Libanan, who defended the report on the floor, said that even without Roxas' affidavit, there was no showing that Desierto had a direct hand in the bribery.

"The event, the exchange of words, took place between Mr. Timbol and Attorney Francisco," Libanan said.

Libanan argued that Francisco did not even see the contents of a plastic bag where the money intended for Desierto was supposedly contained.

"Francisco did not see the money, only the plastic bag," Libanan argued.

Padilla asked why Desierto and Roxas would later meet in a five-star hotel if it had merely been a plastic bag.

Libanan conceded there could be "something in the plastic bag but we do not know" what it was.

In a news conference earlier in the day, Bayan Muna party list Rep. Liza Maza also pointed to defects in the committee report.

Maza said that the minutes of the Dec. 18 meeting of the committee showed that there was no discussion of the "facts or details of the complaint" but only voting.

She also said there was no quorum when the committee met on Jan. 16 to approve the report.

Maza and fellow Bayan Muna party list representatives Satur Ocampo and Crispin Beltran asked that the first complaint be remanded to the justice committee for reconsideration.

The House is expected to take several more days to deliberate on the committee report. It is expected to take a vote on Tuesday or Wednesday next week, after which the one-year ban on succeeding impeachment complaints take effect.

Rep. Oscar Moreno, who endorsed the first complaint and co-signed the second, said the signature campaign for the second impeachment complaint was "moving."

High court

At the Supreme Court, an official who asked not to be named said the high court junked Syjuco's petition, which was filed only on Monday, because it had no jurisdiction over the petition. The decision was reached during an en banc session of the 15-member court yesterday, the official said.

Syjuco filed a petition for declaratory relief involving the validity of Sections 16 and 17, Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure in Impeachment Proceedings adopted by the House last Nov. 28.

However, the high court said a petition for declaratory relief was "cognizable" by the regional trial courts, not the Supreme Court, as stipulated in the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure.

The SC is expected to issue today a written decision on the matter, the official added.

In his petition, Syjuco said there was an urgent need for the SC to "clarify and interpret" the two provisions in the light of constitutional questions arising from the two impeachment complaints filed against Desierto.

Syjuco contended that the House adopted the questioned provisions under the "erroneous" interpretation of the constitutional provision that the complaint is "deemed initiated" by the mere filing of a verified complaint by a member of the House or by any citizen who files a verified complaint endorsed by a member of the House.

He said the House's interpretation was different: that a complaint is deemed initiated once the justice committee finds it sufficient in substance or once the House votes to overturn a committee finding of insufficiency.

Syjuco explained that the Constitution was clear that the "whole body of the House, not just a member thereof or a citizen endorsed by a member of the House, is clothed with the power to initiate such proceeding."

In other words, he said, an impeachment should be deemed initiated to proceed to the Senate only after the required number of votes of the House had been obtained.

Applying the questioned rules in the two Desierto cases would mean that the second impeachment complaint cannot prosper if the House votes down the first impeachment complaint.

With a report from Michael Lim Ubac

Court revives 62 cases

From page A1

He noted the "continued inaction of the Office of the Special Prosecutor and/or the Ombudsman, in spite of repeated warnings of this court," and pointed to the "prosecution's continued failure to resolve the reinvestigation of these cases long after the lapse of the 60-day period originally granted" as directly resulting in the "delay of the trial of these cases for more than one year now."

However, Ferrer said dismissal of the cases was not warranted; instead, the court should have ordered the prosecutors to "explain why it should not be cited for contempt of court for failure to comply with a lawful order of the court."

But the right of the accused to a speedy trial was not compromised, Ferrer said, citing, among other reasons, the fact that none of the respondents had complained that their right to a speedy trial had been undermined as a result of the delays.

"Considering the nature and importance of the cases, if there is any prejudice that may have resulted as a consequence of the postponements, it would be more against the government than against any of the accused . . . none of (whom) has come out to claim having been thus prejudiced," Ferrer wrote.

He was joined in the decision by Associate Justices Catalino Castañeda Jr. and Rodolfo Palattao, who wrote a concurring opinion. The chair of the division, Narciso Nario, and Raoul Victorino dissented and filed separate opinions.

Palattao noted that in the Aug. 20, 2001 hearing, "it was the prosecution who sought (a postponement), on the flimsy ground that they have yet to resolve a motion for re-investigation filed by the accused."

But Palattao said he found Nario's oral dismissal of the case precipitate and invalid because it was without the concurrence of the two other justices in the division.

Nario maintained that "the right of the accused to speedy trial has been violated. Indeed, the repeated failure of the prosecution to comply with the various orders of the court ... evidently without any valid excuse or justification, constitutes an inordinate delay."

Victorino wrote that "it is therefore evident that the undue delay in the trial of the cases was solely due to the unjustified inaction of the prosecution."

Tax credits

The graft cases stemmed from the alleged abuse of tax credits and duty drawbacks, which are refund payments made by the government on duties and taxes paid by export companies.

Accused in the cases are Belicena and 27 others, including then Petron Corp. chair Monico Jacob.

Also among the respondents are Uldarico Andutan Jr., then executive director of the One Stop Shop at the Department of Finance that issued the tax credit certificates; and Celso Legarda, Apolinario Reyes, Rafael Dia Jr., and Reynaldo Campos, all Petron officials.

The Ombudsman also identified at least 18 garment firms that allegedly transferred 246 tax credit certificates with a total value of P614.6 million in favor of Petron.

Other respondents are owners of businesses that had bought or sold the TCCs. They are Regina Gonzales, Carlos Go Chung, Tan Dy Yee, Angel Chua, Guiller Tumangon, Esteban Castillo, Rosenda Ong, Antonio Roman, Marialen Corpuz, Evelita Tizon, Purita Napenas, Melrose Tordessilas, Marife Cabadin, Gemma Abara, Asuncion Magdaet, Ramon Santos, Danny Ty, Rodrigo Rayo Garcia, Tam Yek Kiat Chua, Reynaldo Ong Tan, and Tan Cho Chiang.

Under the country's tax laws, certain export companies are allowed to obtain tax credits for duties that they pay or on imported materials used for the manufacture of products for export. The companies are allowed to sell the TCCs to other companies.

The Ombudsman said the respondents had issued TCCs illegally from 1993 to 1997. The respondents, however, claim that the TCC issuance was valid and had been done before.

Unilateral act

In his motion for reconsideration, prosecutor Orlando Ines argued that the August 2001 dismissal was a "unilateral act of the court in complete disregard of the defense's willingness to proceed with the arraignment and pre-trial."

Calling the dismissal "untimely and hasty," Ines also pointed out that none of the accused had invoked their right to a speedy trial, and that the court had already ruled on the existence of probable cause when it issued arrest warrants for all the accused.

The Aug. 20, 2001 hearing, during which the dismissal order was issued, was actually for arraignment and pre-trial purposes and not to hear any motions to dismiss, he further noted.

GMA bags $1.2B in investments

From page A1

come from Britain's Mace Ltd., which is planning an $850-million aircraft maintenance facility at the former US Clark Air Base.

The project will employ 28,000 workers, according to Ms Macapagal.

US investors have also committed $300 million for an international flight training facility to be run by the multinational firm Garsol Management Innovators Inc.

Sean-Gerard Villoria, president of Garsol, said the training facility would also be put up in Clark, employing about 1,000 people. At least $50 million will be spent for infrastructure.

The project aims to privatize flight training for commercial and military pilots and will include training in search and rescue.

Ms Macapagal said Royal Ventures of Canada was also planning a $12-million project to build 3,400 low-cost houses for police, government employees, teachers and families of overseas Filipino workers.

She said Canada's Email Finitech Inc. and Vichem Coatings and Chemicals Inc. will invest an initial $5 million for a porcelain enamel coating service for steel and aluminum products.

The project is expected to earn $12 million a year in export revenues, she said.

An American company also planned to invest $5 million on a call center in the Philippines. Ms Macapagal withheld the name of the company pending board approval of the project.

In New York, Ms Macapagal also launched the road show for the privatization of state-owned National Power Corp, through which the government expected to raise $5 billion.

"So more than ever, it is important to capitalize and project the strengths of our nation in both security and economic competitiveness," she said.

Ms Macapagal said British Prime Minister Tony Blair had approved her proposal for Scotland Yard to train the Philippine National Police in fighting organized crime, including kidnapping.

"Prime Minister Blair has approved the proposal and one of our police generals has been invited to London soon to work out the detailed curriculum," she said.

The Macapagal administration last year came under fire for its failure to stem an upsurge of crime, particularly kidnappings, which alarmed investors. *With reports from AP and Reuters*

Wanted . . .

From page A1

must have the illness without being ashamed of it, must be successful and knowledgeable about the disease and must be willing to come out in public.

The Philippine League Against Epilepsy (PLAE) announced yesterday that it was looking for an epileptic celebrity, who can boost its education campaign to remove the social stigma associated with the ailment.

Citing singer Gary Valenciano, a diabetic whose disclosure of his illness helped the public to understand diabetes, the PLAE said a popular figure from government or show business would help the group's campaign to promote a normal life for epileptics.

"You see, this has a snowball effect. If someone comes out, then others will also follow," PLAE president Leonor Cabral-Lim said.

The ailment affects one to 3 percent of Filipinos. All over the world some 500 million people suffer the social consequences of epilepsy, with 5 million new cases emerging every year in developing countries.

Lim, who teaches at the University of the Philippines-Manila, said most epileptics suffer from self-esteem problems because of the "social penalties" of the ailment, which include discrimination in employment, education, legislation and marriage.

Lim said even the educated public tended to associate epilepsy with mental disorder.

She said the Philippines was the first country in the Western Pacific to launch a campaign on epilepsy, dubbed "Epilepsy: Out of the Shadows," in cooperation with the World Health Organization, International League Against Epilepsy and International Bureau for Epilepsy.

The campaign was officially launched in the country in September last year to improve the acceptability of epilepsy as a treatable disease and to encourage the government to address the concerns of epileptics.

A survey by the Philippine Neurological Association in 1999 showed that 32 percent of patients and caregivers, and 11 percent of health workers in the country had not read or heard about epilepsy.

The survey also found that 17 percent of health workers and 4 percent patients had the mistaken belief that marrying, caring for or living with epileptics could transmit epilepsy. They also believed that they could get the disease by witnessing an attack.

"If we can accept hypertension, diabetes and asthma, then we should also be able to accept epilepsy as a condition," Lim said.

"There is nothing to be ashamed about because it's just like other diseases. The people just lack education," she said.

PLAE is enlisting the support of the Department of Health in its advocacy campaign, including the drafting of a National Epilepsy Act that seeks to remove discrimination against epileptics even in activities like driving.

PLAE members will meet with DOH officials this week.

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RP cycling bet falters

BENTONG, Malaysia—The Philippines' Arnel Quirimit crashed out of the Top 10 after Stage 4 of the Le Tour de Langkawi yesterday. Quirimit (4:24:01), who held the blue jersey for three days, finally yielded his grip of the top spot, fading in the final 15 kilometers due to dehydration. He arrived seven minutes and 58 seconds behind stage winner Moreno Di Blase of Mobilvetta Design.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA—Dallas Mavericks vs Indiana Pacers at 9 a.m. (r – 4:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.) on ESPN

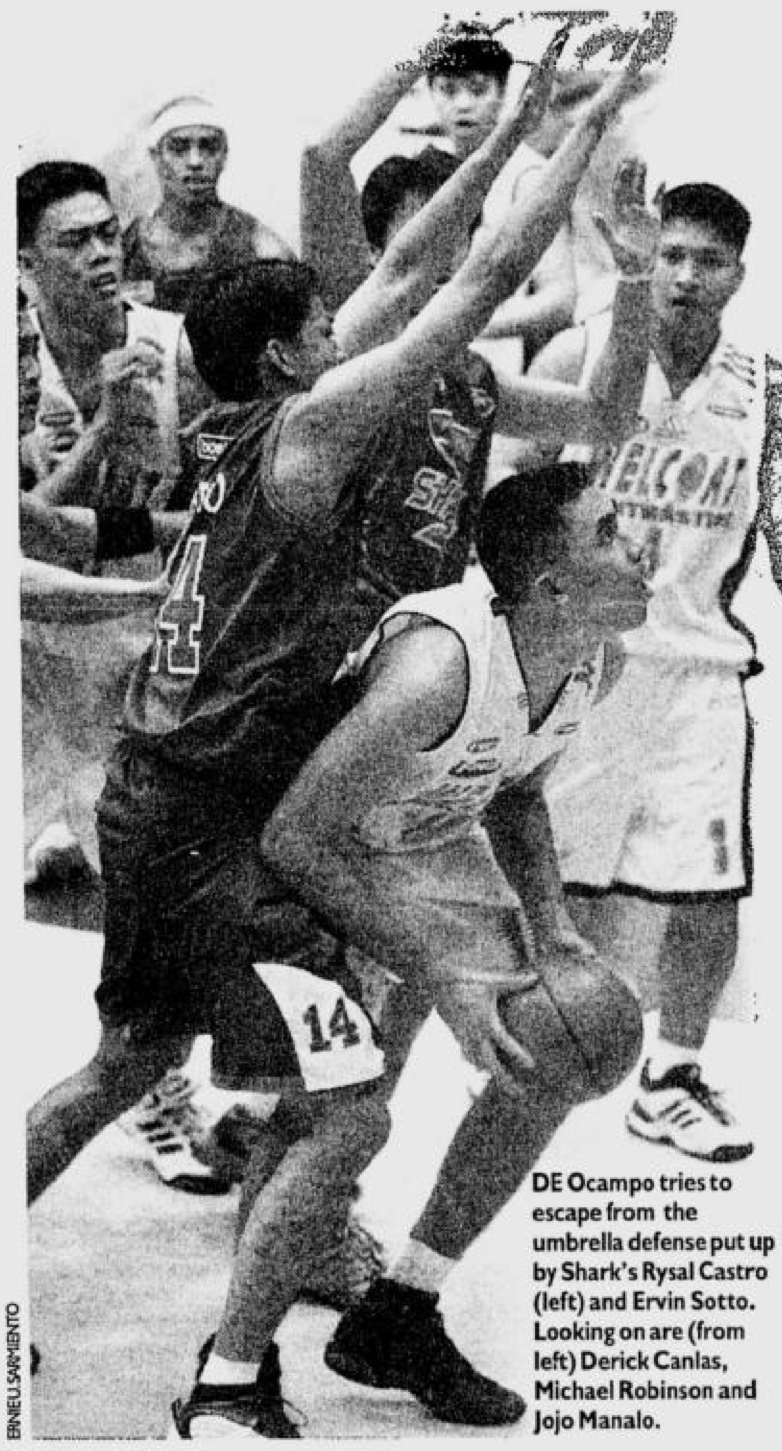
US NCAA—Iowa vs Indiana at 1 p.m., Providence vs Connecticut at midnight on ESPN

GOLF: PGA AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, Third Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

PBL FINALS

Welcoat Paints foils Shark sweep

De Ocampo named league MVP


DE Ocampo tries to escape from the umbrella defense put up by Shark's Rysal Castro (left) and Ervin Sotto. Looking on are (from left) Derick Canlas, Michael Robinson and Jojo Manalo.

ERNELI SARMIENTO

By Dennis U. Eroa

Best-of-seven
Shark 3, Welcoat 1
Game One:
Shark 80 Welcoat 79 (OT)
Game Two:
Shark 67 Welcoat 58
Game Three:
Shark 61 Welcoat 46
Game Four:
Welcoat 66 Shark 47

GAME TOMORROW:
(Makati Coliseum)
5 p.m.—Welcoat Paints vs Shark Energy Drink

MULTI-TITLED Welcoat Paints turned Shark Energy Drink's dream of a sweep into nightmare after an overpowering 66-47 victory in Game Four of the PBL Challenge Cup best-of-seven championship series last night at the Makati Coliseum.

Welcoat still trails Shark in the series, 3-1, and must beat its foes thrice in succession to become the first team to rally from a 0-3 deficit and snatch the title.

"One miss, we die," said Welcoat coach Junel Baculi. "We took things for granted in the first three games and now we must work double time in order to come back."

Baculi, who is looking to steer Welcoat to its fifth title in three years, said the Paintmasters played with the hearts of champions. "I feel that our title-bid started with this win. Now we've got to take it one game at a time because Shark is not going to take this loss sitting down."

Game Five is set tomorrow at 5 p.m. Shark nipped Welcoat, 4-3, in last year's Challenge Cup. The Paintmasters, by virtue of their twin wins in the Chairman's Cup over the Energy Drink Kings, hold a 2-1 edge in their thrilling rivalry.

Shark won Game One in overtime, 80-79, before routing Welcoat in the next two games.

Center Yancy de Ocampo, who was awarded the MVP trophy before the start of Game Four, teamed with Jojo Manalo, Ren Ren Ritualo, Brixter Encarnacion and Celino Cruz in keeping Welcoat's offense in high gear all throughout the one-sided game.

"We can still do it," said De Ocampo when asked whether the Paintmasters can still rally to win. "We're committed to give Welcoat the title."

Supremacy

Upstaged by Shark's big men in the first three games, the 6-foot-8 De Ocampo reasserted his supremacy in last night's encounter. He poured in 11 points and grabbed 14 rebounds. Manalo had 15, while Ritualo finished with eight, same output of Derick Canlas and Brixter Encarnacion, a vital member of Welcoat's offensive rotation.

Shark played an error-filled first half as it trailed by 18, 39-21. Shark's golden moment came when Warren Ybañez spearheaded a blazing rally which enabled the Energy Drink Kings to come to within 10, 43-33, two minutes left.

But unlike in the past games, Shark's vaunted deadly finishing bite evaporated in the face of Welcoat's tough stand. Ritualo's second three-point bomb settled the issue, 60-41, 3:50 remaining in the fourth quarter.

Baculi gambled on the man-to-man defense, hoping that his main men would deliver the goods. Welcoat's zone was ruined by Shark's snipings in the first three games but the man-to-man did wonders.

The sole Shark dribbler to enter double-digit scoring was Ybañez with 12 but he appeared tired in the face of Cruz's hard-nosed defense. Shooter Ysmael Junio finished with nine, all in the fourth period and Welcoat already assured of victory.

Chester Tolomia was held to eight points, one in the fourth quarter, by the tireless defense put up by Manalo and Cali Orfrecio. Ervin Sotto, whose heroics lifted Shark to win in Games Two and Three, slumped to two points.

Joining De Ocampo in the mythical five were Tolomia, Ritualo, Allan Salangsang of Kutitap and Ybañez. The sportsmanship award went to Dondon Mendoza of Ana Freezers, while Montaña's Gary David emerged as the Most Improved Player.

Annual awards

The PBL Press Corps, composed of sportswriters from broad sheets and tabloids, will hold its separate annual awards on Feb 15. It will select the Discovery of the Year, Mr. Excitement, finals MVP, Sixth man, Coach of the Year, Sportsmanship awardee and Defensive Player of the Year.

Scores:

WELCOAT 66—Manalo 15, De Ocampo 11, Ritualo 8, Encarnacion 8, Canlas 8, Patrimonio 6, Cruz 6, Orfrecio 2, Tan 2.

SHARK 47—Ybañez 12, Junio 9, Tolomia 8, Castro 7, Cole 5, Basilides 2, Sotto 2, Robinson 2, Ortega 0, Limare 0, Rodriguez 0.

Quarters: 17-9, 39-21, 48-35, 66-47

LBC eyes substitute for Adducul

By Roy Luarca

THE LBC Batangas Blades have a fallback position in case they fail to come to terms with 2000 MBA MVP Romel Adducul. They are eyeing Ariel de Castro as his replacement when the MBA opens its fifth season on April 6.

LBC Batangas coach Nash Racela said he is hopeful that Adducul would stay with the Blades, but if not, the 6-foot-5 De Castro is a primary option because he hails from Lipa City.

The 22-year-old De Castro, a former National University Bulldog, last played for Ana Water Dispenser in the PBL Challenge Cup, where he dislocated his left elbow after a hard fall during a rebound scramble. Sources, however, said he'd be ready before the MBA opening.

"He (De Castro) is a project. Maybe I have to look for one more big guy if Adducul does leave us," said Racela, who steered the Blades to the 2001 MBA national title.

The 6-foot-6 Adducul, among those named to the 30-man candidates pool to the Busan Asian Games, expressed his desire to be traded to another MBA team after LBC Batangas refused to release him to the PBA due to a live contract.

Thus far, the Blades have only 6-foot-6 Chris Corbin and 6-foot-4 Jayson Cuevas to man the slot.

Racela said they resume practice next week as negotiations are still going on for the players with expired contracts.

Alex Compton, the 1999 MVP, however, has re-signed for one year and Eddie Laure, last year's MVP, has a live contract.

Southern Ladies Open begins today

Chua hard-pressed to keep crown vs Villaroman; Miñoza special guest

Alice's baby

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

ONE of the most underrated golf tournaments in the country is the Southern Ladies Open. It is called that because the event is held only in Deep Down South—usually either in the Visayas or Mindanao.

Originally, it was always held in Cebu after it made its splashing debut in 1963. It was only several years later that the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines thought it was time to move the event to another venue. Later, it was decided it was much better if it could hop from one course to another. The idea was to involve as many female parbusters as possible. The late Henry Quema, then the NGAP president, was the Southern Ladies Open founder. Henry, who I had the momentous occasion to shake hands with in Legazpi City in 1978, was a story of tragedy. Henry died in 1978 just weeks after he fell off the stairs of a restaurant after we had dinner in Legazpi.

But that's another story.

I said the Southern Ladies Open is underrated because, seemingly, this country habitually yields to machismo. Women are second fiddle to men. The saying "ladies first" caters but to man's inherent chivalrous ways.

But to me, the Southern Ladies is not second-class. The thrills it generates yearly are something to remember by. Through the years, I have shadowed it—from Bacolod to Cebu to Davao and to Cagayan de Oro. It's fun following the exploits of our lady parbusters on the golf course. I have seen winners proceeding to win honors for the country abroad.

"I always make it a point to squeeze the Southern Ladies Open into my schedule," said Alice Andrada, a pioneer. "A year will not pass without it being held."

Alice, an NGAP director for nearly 18 years now, saw action in the first Southern Ladies Open in 1963 in the company of such golf luminaries like Ellen Dakudao, Baby Ascalon, Remy Perez, Gloria Alazas, Tina Librado and Suga Yuvienco. Some years later, they were joined regularly by Cebu's Vicky Moraza and Iligan's Leni Cabile, a pioneer of the world-famed Bayanihan Dance Group.

"I'm proud of my citymate Leni (Cabine)," said Ben Reyes, a many-time president of the Iligan Golf Club. "She's one of Iligan's best lady golfers ever."

Alice's baby has nurtured the likes of Sonia Tugot, Mary Grace Estuesta, Grace Ebalde, Yvette de Leon, Ruby Chico, Jenny Rosales, Carmelette Villaroman and Heidi Chua—all greats in their own right.

"Even when I was already residing in Australia, I would always come back just to participate in the Southern Ladies Open," said Alice, who soon found herself keeping the Southern meet flame alit every year since she became the NGAP treasurer in 1985. "To me, it has become almost a lifetime commitment."

May your tribe increase, Alice.

DEL MONTE, Bukidnon—Heidi Chua needs more than spunk when she starts defense of her Southern Ladies Open crown beginning today here.

Chua, who won gallantly last year in the tournament's 38th edition in Bacolod, will have Carmelette Villaroman as her chief rival anew at a course famed as the "secret jewel" of Mindanao.

The tournament was flagged off yesterday through the Lam-Am event, followed by the hitting of ceremonial balls by NGAP Ladies Committee Chair Alice Andrada, Frankie Minoza, Mayor Socorro Acosta of Manolo Fortich, Del Monte VP Jimmy Ong, golf chair Mike Comique and Del Monte executive Yoyong Velez.

ANDRADA

The 25-year-old Chua nipped Villaroman last year, 158-156, in a dramatic duel that went down the wire in this fabled, 54-hole tournament that assembles the nation's top female parbusters annually since 1963.

System of scoring is molave, which gives a double bogey 1 point and birdie 4 points.

Both are fresh from big wins one week apart—Chua in the Philippine Ladies Open at Wack Wack and Villaroman in the DHL-NGAP Open at Canlubang only last week.

To keep her crown, Chua must dish out a big heart anew to turn back Villaroman, who did not play in the recent RP Ladies Open.

Aside from Villaroman, Chua has also Aileen Rose Yao to contend with in the series sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission, Wide Wide World Express-DHL, Directories Philippines Corp., Air Philippines, Mizuno, Hidden Spring and Perrier, Inc., Mitsubishi Motors, Belmonte Corp. and the Gopez Group of Companies.

Chua dethroned Yao in the last RP Open, winning by a single shot over the hard-luck Yao.

Aside from Villaroman and Yao, other notables entered include Lina de Guzman, Lora Roberto, Lucy Landicho, Tracy Locsin and Eva Minoza.

The 25-year-old Eva is Frankie Minoza's youngest sister carrying a handicap of 6.

A total of 80 hopefuls are entered, coming from 15 clubs—Canlubang, Manila Southwoods, Villaroman, Cebu Country Club, Sta. Elena, Alabang, Pueblo de Oro, Orchard, Wack Wack, Iligan, Club Filipino de Cebu, Valley, Riviera and Philippine Navy.

AFP backs sports body on athletes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE ARMED Forces of the Philippines has agreed to have a compromise with the Philippine Sports Commission regarding the exemption sought by the sports agency for national athletes who belong to the military and are required to undergo basic training.

Sources said the AFP decided to give special arrangement to at least 400 members of the national training pool soon after high-ranking AFP officers met with PSC chair Eric Buhain Monday at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The AFP allowed the national athletes to just undergo the required training after the Asian Games in Busan, South Korea, in September on a staggered basis instead of the planned four-month course that was to start next month.

This will help the athletes focus on their training for the Asian Games, where the country is expected to send at least 200 athletes in a bid to improve its dismal one-gold-medal output four years ago in Bangkok.

Boston fans want more after Patriots' win

BOSTON—The New England Patriots' improbable Super Bowl victory did more than end this city's major championship drought: It left fans feeling that perhaps the string of woe—from Bucky to Buckner to Bourque—is a thing of the past.

"Boston deserves this," Tom Berry said Monday while standing outside the brick walls of Fenway Park. "Boston sports fans are the greatest in the world."

Berry, a 54-year-old Harvard Club masseur, is legally blind, and watches games through a telescope-like apparatus.

Bedecked in a Patriots hat, shirt and coat, and clutching three full bags of newly bought Patriots souvenirs, Berry said he felt a new sense of optimism.

"Hopefully this will continue around town," Berry said.

Dan Reichgott saw the Patriots' 20-17, last-second upset of the St. Louis Rams on Sunday as a sign of better things to come.

"I have a feeling the next championship will come down the street in Kenmore Square," the 19-year-old Boston University sophomore said, referring to the Red Sox. Reichgott is too young to remember the city's last title team, the 1986 Boston Celtics of the NBA.

Last year, none of the region's four major professional sports teams even made the playoffs.

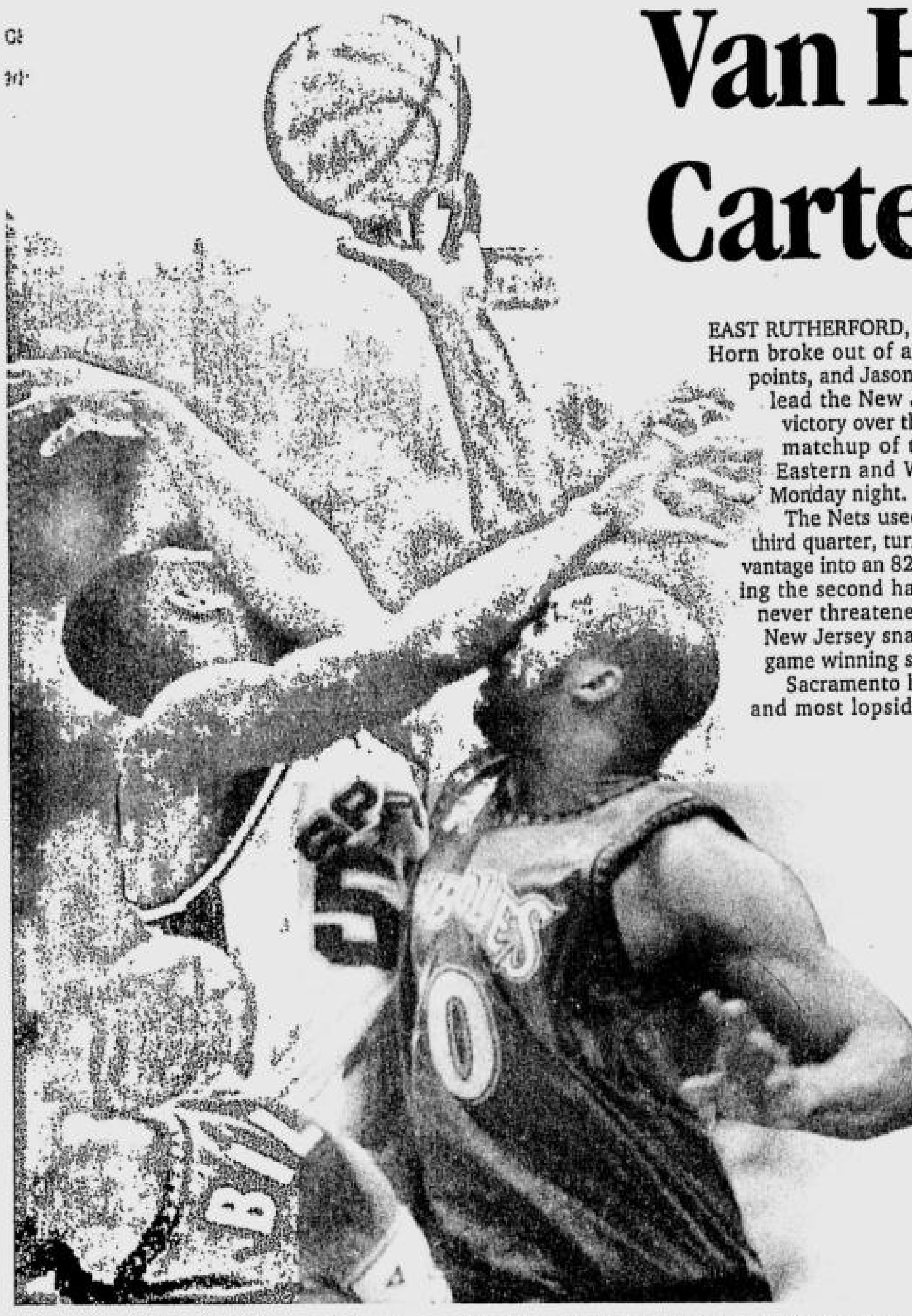
With a new Red Sox ownership, and with the Celtics and Bruins poised to make the playoffs, many Boston faithful are proudly proclaiming that the drought is over.

A downtown parade was planned for the Patriots on Tuesday, and celebratory signs with phrases like "We did it!" were posted all around the city. Drivers jubilantly honked their horns throughout the day.

Brian Codagnone, associate curator of the Sports Museum of New England, said Boston fans view the title as a reward for their loyalty.

The Celtics' 16 titles in a 30-year span spoiled Boston fans, said K.C. Jones, who played on eight of those championship teams and coached two more. He said this year's team can't help but be inspired by the Patriots' victory. *AP*

Van Horn, Kidd lift Nets; Carter, Raptors trip 76ers



SAN Antonio's David Robinson (left) gets a hard foul from Minnesota's Gray Trent in the third quarter. AP

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey — Keith Van Horn broke out of a scoring slump with 25 points, and Jason Kidd added 14 points to lead the New Jersey Nets to a 117-83 victory over the Sacramento Kings in a matchup of the top teams from the Eastern and Western Conferences on Monday night.

The Nets used a 25-8 run to open the third quarter, turning a 57-54 halftime advantage into an 82-62 lead. The Kings, playing the second half of a back-to-back set, never threatened the rest of the way as New Jersey snapped Sacramento's five-game winning streak.

Sacramento had its lowest point total and most lopsided defeat of the season while being held 21.9 points below its league-leading average of 104.9. The loss was just the second in the last 19 games for Sacramento, which still owns the NBA's best record (36-11).

Raptors 100, 76ers 93

In Philadelphia, Vince Carter scored 13 of his 28 points in the third quarter, leading Toronto past Philadelphia.

Allen Iverson scored 36 points for the Sixers, but was ejected after getting his second technical foul with 6.3 seconds left.

Rockets 104, Jazz 97

In Houston, Steve Francis shot 18-for-22 from the line and scored 33 points, and Cuttino Mobley added 30 points, to lead Houston to a victory over Utah.

The Rockets led by 13 points in the fourth quarter before the Jazz rallied behind Karl Malone. Malone scored seven points in a 9-3 run that gave the Jazz a 90-89 lead with 4:36 remaining.

Spurs 113, Timberwolves 83

In San Antonio, David Robinson had 13 points and 15 rebounds as six San Antonio players scored in double figures to lead the San Antonio over Minnesota.

The Spurs, who snapped a four-game home losing streak, played most of the second half without star forward Tim Duncan, who was ejected, along with Minnesota's Kevin Garnett, early in the third quarter. *AP*

COMPLETE RESULTS

Toronto 100, Philadelphia 93; New Jersey 117, Sacramento 83; Houston 104, Utah 97; San Antonio 113, Minnesota 83. *AP*

NCA 7-cock derby resumes Feb. 11-13 at Big Dome

BIG-TIME cockfighting returns to the Araneta Coliseum on Feb. 11-13 when the country's top cocker-breeders see action in a pre-Valentine NCA 7-Cock Derby under the aegis of the National Cockers Association.

Trhee-cock elimination fights will be held on Monday, Feb. 11, while the four-cock finals will be staged on Wednesday, Feb. 13. Derby hosts are noted sportsmen Rep. Claude Bautista and Boyboy Roa.

Leading the star-studded cast are Dicky Lim, solo champion of the recent World Slasher Cup; Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Ambassador Danding Cojuangco, the venerable James Chiongbian, three-time Rizal Gov. Ito Ynares, twice Cocker of the Year Jun Santiago, Pampanga's champion cockers Jun and Rudy Jingco, lawyer Rudy Salud and Lito Orillaza, Mario Villamor of Phoenix fame, the Madlambayan brothers, Alex and Gerry Escalona, Boy Lechon and RQP, Gerry Fevidal, engineer Pacifico Berin, Louie Cua and Philip Chiongbian.

Also in the fold are Makati Mayor Jojo Binay and Vice Mayor Nestor Mercado, Iking Araneta, Ram Lopez, Eddie and Bomboy Araneta, Georgie Antonio, famous breeder Boy Jiao, Ryoichi Saito, Ruel Ricafort, Manny Co, Allan Tan, John Capinpin, Frank Berin and Rep. Rudy Albano.

Rounding up the stellar field are Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco, Patrick Puno, Jet Fernando, Boyet Joson, Dennis Roldan, Meycauayan Mayor Eddie Alarilla, Ruel Feliciano and Sons (Central Luzon); Boy Velez, Johnny Jalandoni, Ed Ledesma, Boy Nilo Lizares, Ramon Guanzon and Felix Trebol (Negros Occidental); Ito Ynares, Mayor Vic Amante, Blandie Tolentino and Pol Estrellado (Southern Tagalog) and Boy Primallon, Kano Daniel, Arthur Uy and Jung-Jung Morales (Mindanao).

On Feb. 18-20, another NCA 7-Cock Derby will be held, with Gov. Ito Ynares and Manny Co as hosts.

Karting seminar set Sunday

THE PHILIPPINE International Karting Association will hold its annual pre-season clinic on Sunday, Feb. 10, at the Carmona Circuit Philippines in Carmona, Cavite.

The clinic is open to all karting and motorsport enthusiasts aged 7 years and up. The comprehensive course will carry lectures on karting and motor racing as well as hands-on driving sessions under the supervision of the country's top race drivers.

The condensed karting course is mandatory for all novice karters competing in the 2002 Shell Super Kart Series. Participants will be issued certificates of completion at the end of the event. The certificate is a requisite for new karters in securing a Competition License from the Automotive Association Philippines (AAP), formerly of the Philippine Motor Association (PMA).

The kart clinic will commence at 9 a.m. Enrollment fee for the course is P3,000.00.

Interested parties may register or inquire by calling/texting Flor (0919-4676822) or Len (0917-5272963 or 531-29-62) or by visiting Paintworks at 640 Boni Ave., Mandaluyong City.

Football head appeals for unity

SOFT-SPOKEN football president and Philippine Olympic Committee executive board member Rene Z. Adad has appealed to his fellow sports leaders to be "calm, sober and united as we tackle our sports agenda, especially our participation in the 2002 Asian Games in Busan, Korea."

"We have a tough task ahead of us because our athletes will be ranged against many of the best competitors in Asia in Busan. As leaders, we should give full attention to our athletes' needs and inspire them to work hard in order to achieve their goals, " said Adad yesterday.

"But we can only inspire our athletes if we show them that we go along well and we work as one," added Adad.

Adad called on his colleagues in the sporting community to extend their support to POC President Celso L. Dayrit as he is so far doing well and is reaching out to the NSAs.

EAST BATANGAS
SUMMIT
2002

BATANGAS CHESS

The Grandmaster Eugenio Torre Chess Institute (GETCI) and the Active Chess Center of Asia (Acca) showed their support to the East Batangas Chess Circuit, a series of active chess tournaments to be held in the province of Batangas. Shown signing the Memorandum of Understanding during the recent East Batangas Summit at the First Asia Institute in Tanauan City are (from left) Acca program director Eric Caballero, Batangas Gov. Hermilando Mandanas, GM Eugene Torre, and FAI School Director Sammy Yap.

Jordan, wife attempting reconciliation

CHICAGO—Michael and Juanita Jordan are giving their marriage another try.

The Jordans, who announced last month they were divorcing after 12 years of marriage, said Monday they are attempting a reconciliation. Juanita Jordan also withdrew the divorce petition she filed Jan. 4 in Lake County Circuit Court.

"We have decided to attempt a reconciliation and our efforts to do so will be greatly enhanced if the privacy of our personal lives is respected," the couple said in a statement issued by Juanita Jordan's attorneys.

Attorneys for both sides confirmed the statement, and said there will be no further comment.

"Juanita's and Michael's joint statement says everything they have to say," said Frederick Sperling, an attorney for Michael Jordan.

In her original divorce petition, Juanita Jordan said past attempts at reconciliation had failed and future ones "would be impractical and not in the best interests of the family." *AP*

Taylor made for SLR

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

AS DEFENDING champion Sta. Lucia Realty pursues its bid to retain the Philippine Basketball Association Governors' Cup, it can only hope that things are still the way it used to be notwithstanding the awful truth that the Realtors have lost frontliners Marlou Aquino and Dennis Espino to the national training pool honing for the Pusan Asian Games. Still, coach Norman Black should thank his lucky stars because he has two hardworking imports to fill the big gap, two high-scoring American players who have the requisite gifts of speed, size, strength and stamina.

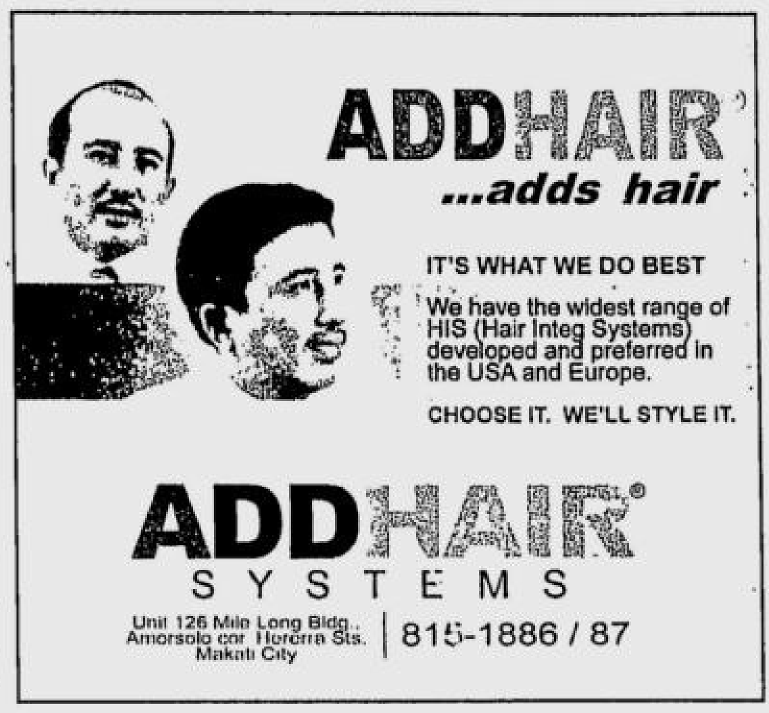
Johnny Antonio Taylor and Lelan McDougal will banner Sta. Lucia's campaign in this foreign-flavored first conference starting on Sunday, Feb. 10, at the Big Dome. Taylor, 27, is the Orlando Magic's first round pick in 1997, while McDougal is a veteran of the European circuit having played in France and Lebanon before joining the San Diego Wildfire in the American Basketball Association. The 6-foot-8, 220 lb Taylor carries the more impressive credentials than 6-foot-3 McDougal.

Taylor is one of only four University of Tennessee at Chatanooga products ever to join the National Basketball Association. He played for Orlando and Denver in three seasons. In the NBA, Taylor chalked single-game highs of 21 points, 12 rebounds and three assists.

"He plays like a small forward but moves like a big man," said team manager Buddy Encarnado. "*Bihira akong* ma-impress, but Taylor impressed me a lot. So practice *pa lang, kitang-kita na mayroong ibubuga.*"

Sta. Lucia made its presence felt in the PBA last December by winning its ever first title, the Governors' Cup, after nine long years of waiting. But more importantly, Encarnado stressed, the team expects to take home something far more important than a basketball championship. Now on its 19th year in sports, Sta. Lucia, led by CEO and president Exy Robles, executive vice president Vicente Santos and Encarnado himself, is part and parcel of a team that promotes and develops sports in the Philippines. In 1983, it co-founded the then Philippine Amateur Basketball League (PABL), forerunner of the Philippine Basketball League (PBL), where it won a total of six championships. Through the years unbeknownst to many, the Realtors have also bankrolled no less than five national basketball teams, aside from being a generous patron of other sports, including the medal-rich sport of amateur boxing.

"We value the meaning of commitment," said Encarnado.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Welcoat foils Shark sweep /A18

Jordan, wife attempting reconciliation /A19

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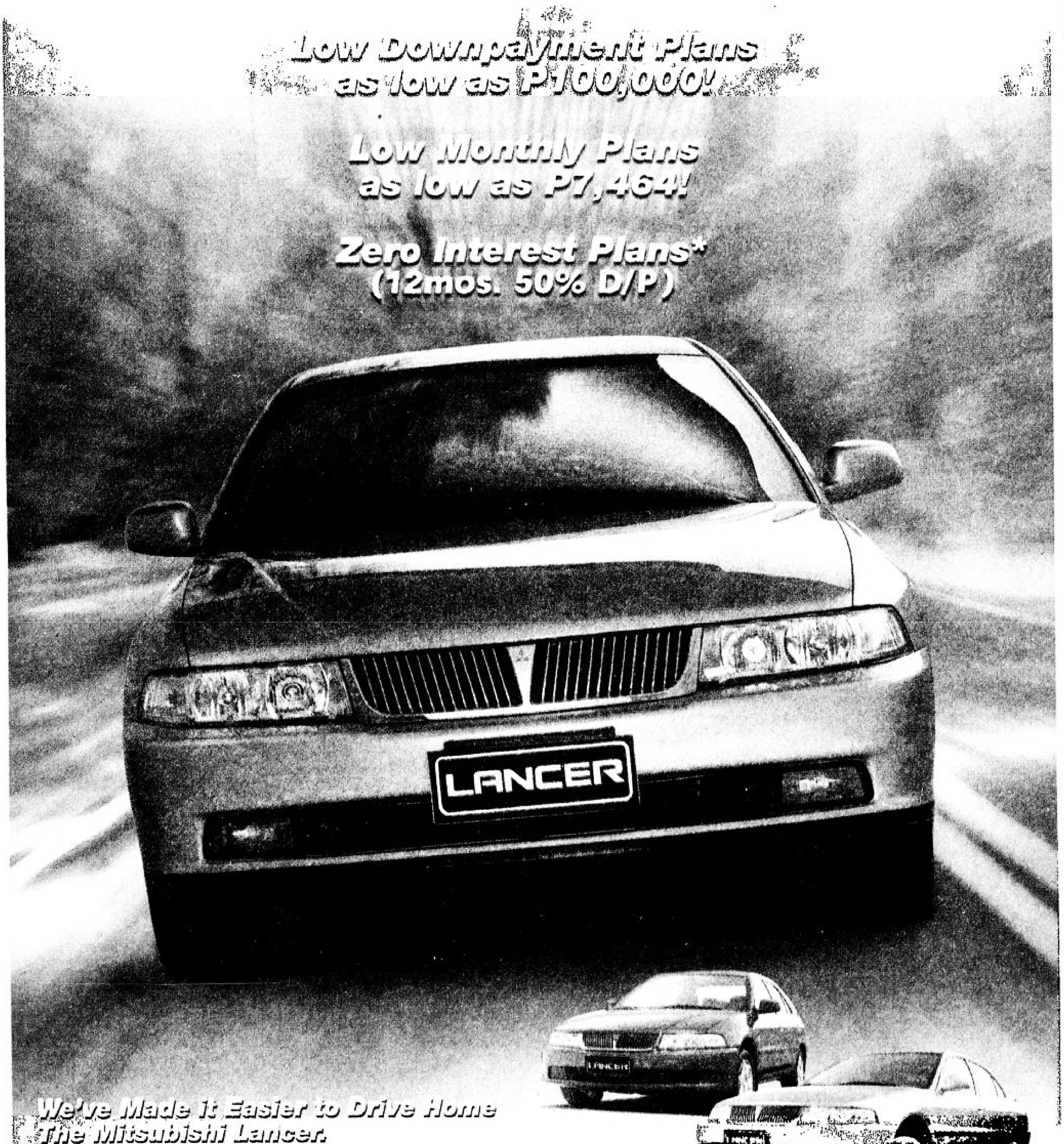
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GLX M/T	620,000	100,000	45,098	31,135	24,771	17,710	14,348	12,560
GLS M/T	680,000		49,462	34,148	27,168	19,424	15,737	13,775
GLS A/T	710,000		51,644	35,654	28,367	20,281	16,431	14,383

P150,000 D/P Plans

Model	ESP	20% D/P	12 mos.	18 mos.	24 mos.	36 mos.	48 mos.	60 mos.
MX	790,000	150,000	57,463	39,671	31,563	22,566	18,282	16,004

*All Plans Subject to Bank Approval

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Model	ESP	50% D/P	12 mos.	18 mos.	24 mos.	36 mos.	48 mos.	60 mos.
GLX M/T	620,000	310,000	*25,833	18,483	14,720	10,524	8,526	7,464
GLS M/T	680,000	340,000	30,139	20,807	16,563	11,841	9,594	8,398
GLS A/T	710,000	355,000	31,468	21,725	17,293	12,364	10,017	8,768
MX	790,000	395,000	35,014	24,173	19,242	13,757	11,145	9,756

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

Lewis: No to April 6 fight

NEW YORK — Lennox Lewis claims he won't be fighting Mike Tyson on April 6. Then again, he might be.

"I'm unaware that the April 6 fight is out," Tyson adviser Shelly Finkel said Monday. "We'll meet to discuss it."

Tyson, who has been refused a license to fight in Nevada, is expected to apply for a license in California later this month.

"The April 6 date is definitely out the window for the Tyson fight, but it may be OK for another fight," Lewis told BBC Radio on Sunday. "Later in the year for a Lewis-Tyson fight, definitely."

However, there's the matter of contracts signed by both fighters for what would be a joint pay-per-view venture between HBO and Showtime.

"We are eager to sit down with Lennox Lewis and discuss his future in the ring," said Ross Greenburg, president of HBO Sports, which has a multifight contract with the WBC-IBF heavyweight champion.

"We're in uncharted waters, and we're not going to engage in any speculation," Greenburg said. *AP*

Coaches clinic slated

NIKE will hold a free Futsal clinic for coaches on Feb. 8-10 at the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center at the Ateneo campus in Loyola.

Fifty coaches are expected to attend the three-day clinic which will run from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily. Participants will receive Futsal balls, manuals and clinic shirts.

The clinic, to be facilitated by Nike and the Philippine Football Federation, aims to educate coaches on the rudiments of futsal, which is derived from the word "futbol de sala" or indoor soccer. It originated in Uruguay in 1930 and fast caught up in popularity in Europe and South America.

Nike hopes that futsal will eventually become one of the more popular sports in the country. "I believe that the sport, being skill-focused and easy-to-learn, will catch the Filipinos' fancy. Like basketball, it can be played indoors and outdoors in all types of weather," said Nike Philippines sports marketing coordinator Rely San Agustin.

Nike, the company that brings inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world, introduced Futsal to the Philippines last year. This year, it will host the first Nike Futsal Open for four succeeding weekends starting on Feb. 15.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Manila defeated Rasht (Iran), 3-1, to place third in the Asian Cities Chess Team championship at the International Trade Center in Dubai. Also today in 1995, La Salle beat University of Santo Tomas, 2-1, to win the 1st UAAP football championship at the Ateneo field.

METRO

Editor **Louie C. Camin**

GMA stops P2.9-billion megadike works in Metro

By Alcuin Papa

BECAUSE of continuing protests by residents of Taguig, Pasig, Pateros and Taytay, Rizal, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered the suspension of the construction of the P2.9-billion "megadike" project in the area.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos said President Arroyo has formally directed the Department of Public Works and Highways to suspend the project due to protests of urban poor groups and farmers in the affected areas.

Residents and urban poor groups in the areas oppose the construction of the megadike because they claimed it would only turn large tracts of land into unproductive marshes and threaten communities on the Laguna Lake shoreline which are in danger of going under floodwaters.

One of the main concerns of the MMDA, aside from garbage and traffic, is flood control.

The megadike project is part of the Metro Manila Flood Control Project-West Manggahan Floodway, which spans 9.8 kilometers from Bicutan, Taguig to Taytay, Rizal. Funding for the project will come from the Japan Bank of International Cooperation. It is one of the components under a 19.5-billion-yen loan package from Japan.

Abalos said the decision to halt the project came after the President's meeting with Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong and National Anti-Poverty Commission Secretary Teresita Delez.

Earlier, residents of Taguig, Pasig and Taytay, Rizal had asked the President to stop the DPWH from completing the project because it would affect some 50,000 families living near the lake.

"The President wanted a win-win situation," Abalos said. "She instructed Delez and Datumanong to discuss the problem with the informal settlers. After this, we will see how we could proceed with the project."

Among the matters to be discussed is the disputed alignment of the dike, which has been opposed by farmers and fishermen in Laguna Lake.

Arsenio de la Cruz, spokesperson of the Taguig Coalition Against Dike, claimed the dike, which is supposed to protect Metro Manila from massive flooding, would not work since Metro Manila is higher than Laguna. Because of this, water deposited in the lake will move to lowlands, he said.

He said Manila's floodwaters would just move on to communities along the shoreline of the lake.

Former Taguig mayor Ricardo Papa said the alignment of the dike would turn some 1,300 hectares of prime land—or about one-third of the total land area of Taguig—into marshlands.

But Taguig Mayor Sigfrido Tinga dismissed the protests against the megadike, claiming they were the handiwork of his political opponents ***(See related story, Page A25).***

HARP

Girlfriend accuses Harp of abuse

By Agnes E. Donato

FIL-AMERICAN basketball player Davonn Harp of the Philippine Basketball Association's Batang Red Bull team is facing physical injuries charges after his girlfriend accused him of maltreating her in a motel room in Pasig City.

Celeste Abad, of Barangay Parado in Valenzuela City, said in her complaint that Harp bit her in the right arm in a fit of jealousy over a text message on her cell phone.

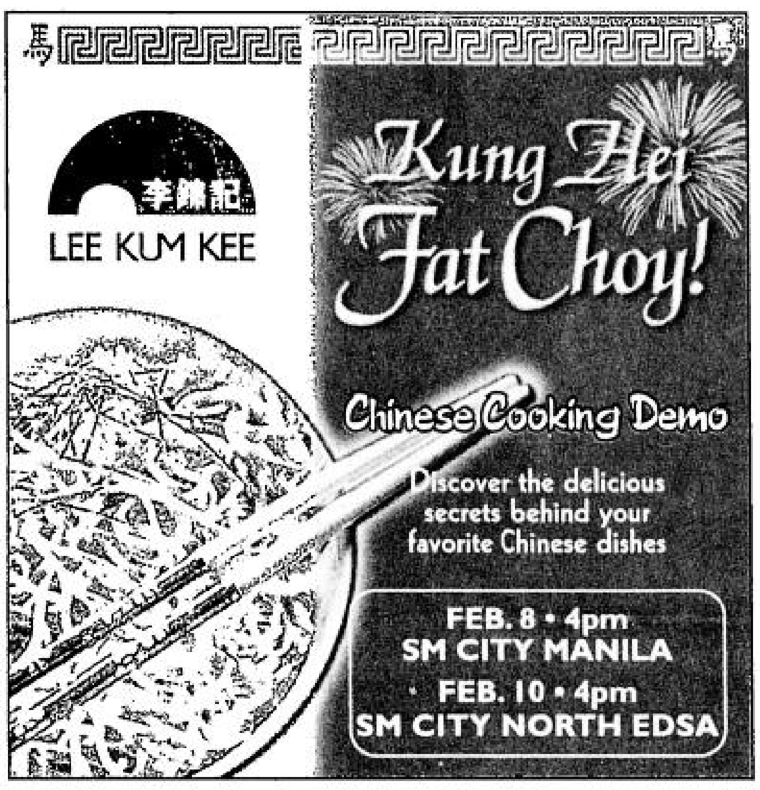
She said she and the basketball player had been in a relationship for six months now, after she met Harp at the Where Else Disco at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati where she used to perform with a band.

Last October, Abad moved in with Harp in his unit at the Platinum Condominium on Annapolis Street in Greenhills, San Juan, but left after three weeks because "I could no longer take it."

She claimed that Harp would throw things at her when he got drunk. She said he usually drank from morning till night. She said she filed maltreatment charges against Harp after a heated argument with him last Sunday afternoon when she visited him in his condominium.

Abad said that they decided to check in at the Victoria Court motel in Pasig City. When they arrived at the motel, Abad said she received a text message on her cell phone, and Harp tried to erase it apparently out of jealousy. She said she took her cell phone from Harp, but he bit her in the arm and tried to grab it back.

She said they began to argue and finally decided to leave the motel. But instead of taking her home, Abad said Harp ordered her to get off his car in the middle of the road.



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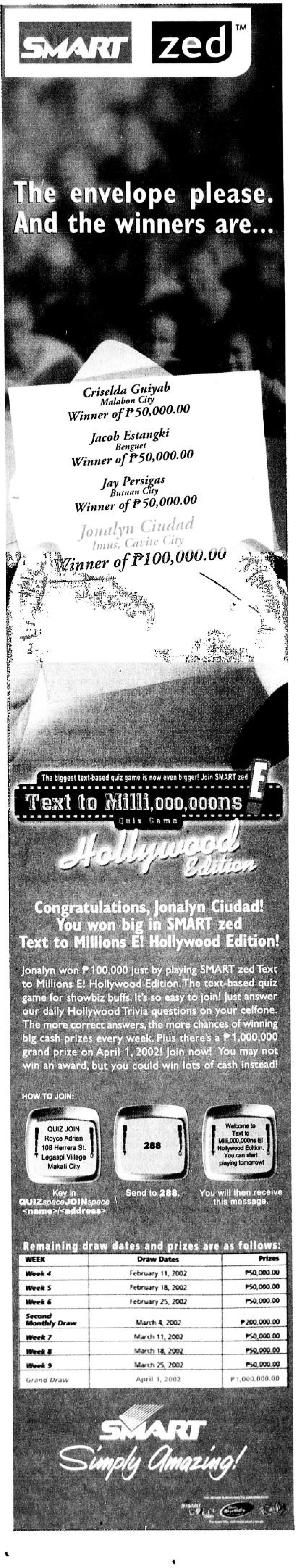

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WEEK	Draw Dates	Prizes
Week 4	February 11, 2002	₱50,000.00
Week 5	February 18, 2002	₱50,000.00
Week 6	February 25, 2002	₱50,000.00
Second Monthly Draw	March 4, 2002	₱200,000.00
Week 7	March 11, 2002	₱50,000.00
Week 8	March 18, 2002	₱50,000.00
Week 9	March 25, 2002	₱50,000.00
Grand Draw	April 1, 2002	₱1,000,000.00

FIRE CODE VIOLATION

Quezon City hotel, 3 hospitals charged

By Agnes E. Donato

THREE government hospitals and a hotel in Quezon City have been slapped with charges before the city prosecutors office for violating the Fire Code and the National Building Code.

The owners and administrators of the four establishments are facing fines and/or prison terms, if they are found guilty of gross negligence, according to documents shown to the INQUIRER on Monday.

"There is a penal clause in the fire code providing for the imposition of penalties in terms of fines and/or imprisonment," said lawyer Felizardo Tiu, legal consultant for the department of engineering, which is under the office of the mayor.

Ten establishments in the city have also been recommended for closure after members of a city task force declared these as to be virtual "firetraps."

According to Quezon City Councilor Ariel Inton, members of the task force that conducted inspections on establishments in the city last year, have filed charges against the owners or administrators of St. Luke's College of Medicine on E. Rodriguez Avenue, the United Doctors Medical Center also on E. Rodriguez Avenue, the East Avenue Medical Center, and the Sulo Hotel, both on East Avenue.

Task force officials also recommended for preventive closure the National Kidney Institute on East Avenue, the Kyoto Apartelle on Kalayaan Avenue, the Delos Santos Medical Center on E. Rodriguez Avenue, the MM Reyes Bldg. on Quirino Highway, Novaliches, the De Leon Bldg. in Talipapa, Novaliches, Fresal International Corp. Bldg. on Kalayaan Avenue, the Manahan Bldg., site of the former Ortañez University on Aurora Boulevard corner Anonas Road, and Wil-Vic Bldg. 2 on V. Luna Road.

The task force is made up of members of the city's Department of Public Order and Safety, the QC fire department, and the national building official from the city's engineering department.

Inton quoted a report from QC Fire Marshall Chief Inspector Oscar Villegas that the 10 buildings "have serious deficiencies, enough to warrant their closure and temporary stoppage of operations."

Inton also cited East Ave Medical Center for having no certificate of occupancy for all its structures, and for failing to comply with all major provisions of the fire code and national building code.

Sulo Hotel and the three hospitals were cited for 10 violations, which include lack of automatic suppression systems, inadequate automatic emergency lights, no panic doors, no occupancy permits, no smoke/heat detection systems, no fire hoses, no exhaust system in kitchens, and faulty exit doors.

But the managers of Sulo Hotel have sent a letter to city officials, saying they have substantially complied with the citations or violations pointed out by city fire inspectors and that they are now just waiting for the installation of the centralized alarm system and the smoke and heat detection system.

The status of the hotel is now up for review, Inton said.

After hundreds died from fires that hit the Ozone Disco in 1996 and the Manor Hotel last year, city inspectors have redoubled their efforts to enforce compliance to the fire code and the national building code.

Inton said the charges were filed in December after more than 90 days notice.

(The establishment owners) were given enough time to comply with fire safety measures, more than the mandatory 60 days," Inton said.

He added that when the owners failed to comply even after 90 days, they opened themselves up for charges.

"While the public may experience some inconvenience during the preventive closure of these structures, we cannot afford to let them remain open until all the deficiencies found by our fire and safety experts have been corrected," Inton said.

"The millions of pesos needed to repair or reconstruct these buildings cannot compare to the value of human life that may be lost if fire breaks out in any one of them," he added.

2 Chinese nabbed for stealing gas stoves worth P2M

By Philip C. Tubeza

MEMBERS of the Western Police District (WPD) arrested two Chinese for allegedly stealing more than P2 million worth of gas stoves in Manila.

Businessman Jimmy Chua, 25, also known as Jaime King, and Henry Lu, 30, whose alias is Lo Kung Bing, both of 710 Asuncion St. in Binondo, Manila, were arrested after the stolen gas stoves were found in Chua's rented warehouse in Baliuag, Bulacan, said Supt. Federico Castro Jr., WPD Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit chief.

Police found 2,155 units of Hanabishi 2-Burner gas stoves and eight boxes of spare parts, Castro said.

Liren Garcia, 43, operations manager of Victor Freight Transportation Incorporated, told police that their driver Marlon Gramatica and his helper failed to deliver P2,160,000 worth of gas stoves on Jan. 29 to the Hanabishi warehoouse at 2 Platinum St., Goldendale II in Tinejeros, Malabon, said Chief Insp. Alex Tiu, of the Western Police District-Theft and Robbery section.

The gas stoves were supposed to come from the office of Victor Freight at 1915 Capulong St., Pritil, Tondo, Manila, Garcia told police.

Tiu said police later found Victor Freight's Isuzu truck (with plate number PSK 743) with the container van in San Rafael, Bulacan on Jan. 31, but the gas stoves were gone.

On a tip from Gramatica's helper, police traced the missing gas stoves at a warehouse at 5770 DRT Highway, Bo. Makinabang, Baliuag, Bulacan on Feb. 1.

"Our operatives conducted a 24-hour painstaking surveillance operation of the warehouse to confirm if the stolen goods were intact and kept there," Castro said. "When we confirmed it, we secured a search warrant."

WPD policemen, led by Tiu, raided the warehouse with the help of barangay officials. The gas stoves were recovered and Chua and King, who were in the warehouse, were arrested, police said.

Chua and King are facing charges of violation of the anti-fencing law. Charges of qualified theft will also be filed against truck driver Gramatica, police said.

MOUTHS WIDE OPEN

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit gives Kerry Tinga, 4, anti-polio vaccine drops as father and Taguig Mayor Sigrido Tinga and Mrs. Kaye Tinga look on during a recent door-to-door vaccination drive in the city. JESS YUSON

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, February 6, 2002
4th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 S 24:2, 9-17
Gospel: Mk 6:1-6

Jesus returned to his own country, and his disciples followed him. When the Sabbath came, he began teaching in the synagogue, and most of those who heard him were astonished. They commented, "How did this come to him? What kind of wisdom has been given to him that he also performs such miracles? Who is he but the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joset and Judas and Simon? His sisters, too, are they not here among us?" So they took offense at him.

And Jesus said to them, "Prophets are despised only in their own country, among their relatives and in their own family." And he could work no miracles there, but only healed a few sick people by laying his hands on them. Jesus himself was astounded at their unbelief.

Commentary

The Claretian seminarians after their second year of theological studies leave school and go for pastoral work in the missions. After one year, they will continue with their third year of theology while living in an immersed community, sharing the life conditions of the people in the poor squatter areas in Metro Manila. For Jesus (as for us now) what was important was not reading, or accumulating ideas and experiences, but to be able to appreciate all that occurred. Jesus received his human learning from Mary, Joseph and his neighbors in Nazareth. Jesus also acquired his wisdom from the Bible and the culture of his people. Yet the Father gave him his spirit to judge as God does and to recognize God in all things, feeling in a different way all the realities of life: this is Wisdom.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (SPECIAL CONTRACTS—SALES)—Elements of a contract of sale—Contracts are the laws between the contracting parties. It shall be fulfilled according to the literal sense of their stipulations. If their terms are clear and leave no room for doubt as to the intention of the contracting parties, the contracts are obligatory no matter what their forms may be, whenever the essential requisites for their validity are present. Sale, by its very nature, is a consensual contract because it is perfected by mere consent. The essential elements of a contract of sale are the following: (a) consent or meeting of the minds, that is consent to transfer ownership in exchange for the price; (b) determinate subject matter; and (c) price certain in money or its equivalent. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Pardo, First Division, Roble v. Arbasa, G.R. No. 130707, July 31, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

2 men convicted of power theft

A MAN was sentenced to six years imprisonment after the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 46 found him guilty of reconnecting an electric service that has been disconnected by Meralco in violation of Republic Act 7832 or anti-electricity pilferage law.

RTC Judge Artemio S. Tipon also ordered Rudy Cecilio of Tondo, Manila to pay a P10,000 fine.

Court records show that Meralco dispatched a team from its Inspection Office accompanied by policemen from Camp Crame in response to reports of rampant illegal connections in the area near Ilaya Street corner Claro Recto Street in Tondo.

The team's surveillance resulted in the arrest of Cecilio who was caught in the act of reconnecting the wire that the electric company earlier disconnected, the records said.

Authorities also found on Cecilio wires and other paraphernalia used in tapping electricity from Meralco lines.

In Makati City, Porfirio Samarista of 8080-F Honradez St., Barangay Olympia was caught in the act of tapping electricity from a Meralco line. A joint team of policemen led by PO2 Renato de Guzman and Meralco inspection personnel apprehended Samarista for allegedly using an illegal connection to his residence.

Meralco earlier received reports that Samarista had regularly been tapping electricity from a Meralco post. The reports said Samarista would tap a Meralco lineside wires every day at 2 p.m. then remove the illegal connection in the morning to avoid detection.

Records of the electric company also showed that Samarista owed Meralco more than P17,000 for a previous violation.

Criminal charges have been filed against Samarista, who is now detained at the Makati City jail.

Meralco spokesman Elpi O. Cuna Jr. said that the electric company has re-intensified its efforts against power thieves.

"Our campaign against illegal connection and power pilferage is a sustaining effort," he said. "In fact, we have re-intensified this to a higher level. Let this serve as a warning to those engaged in this illegal activity, whether they are residential, commercial or industrial (electricity) users. We will get them eventually."

Look who's training at Rizal Memorial

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THERE used to be a national college of physical education, fondly called the NCPE.

It was housed at the old Rizal Memorial Stadium, now known as the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Pardon the pun, but things have become very complex with the current set-up.

The NCPE, which had helped mold many able sports educators, is now only a memory.

This is not a sob piece for a bygone era. But it warms the heart remembering how the likes of Asian athletics star Lolit Lagrosas and volleyball wonder girl Elvie Rivera would mingle with other *provincianas* and spend summer around Rizal Memorial as PE students.

And by PE, we don't mean folk dancing and working the schoolyard, pulling weeds and grass from the rock-solid soil.

We mean good, sound physical education that ultimately helped win medals for athletes from the grassroots.

* * *

Yes, there used to be that myth of a college for national physical educators.

The NCPE, make no doubt about it, had also spawned more than an able bunch of sports managers and trainors.

Anyway, we're saying this with a prayer that the government would reconsider putting something like that old trusted college to train future sports educators and managers.

Problem is, this fervent wish will most likely fall on deaf ears.

Why? Because there is already an existing school within the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, home base of the Philippine Sports Commission, the Philippine Olympic Committee, and practically all the national sports associations.

There's yet no official name for this informal college. But it could just be another NCPE—National College of Political Education.

By this, we don't mean political education of the sort they teach in prestigious universities and more popularly known as political science.

* * *

For one, there's practically no science in the political subjects being mastered by so-called sports leaders around Rizal Memorial.

The training is very savage, if we take it by the intense politicking that has continued to rage in that place that used to be revered as the seat of national sports during the days of great, dedicated leaders like Dr. Regino Ylanan.

The biggest headlines coming from that national sports arena is about personal battles, grab-and-claw tussles among feuding national sports leaders.

The latest big news from the Rizal Memorial political stadium was, of course, the one about a seething coup against POC president Celso Dayrit.

At the other end of the tug-of-war, heading a gang of disenchanted national sports association heads, is the outspoken Go Teng Kok.

* * *

It could have been a cute, curious battle, if played in a proper field like the halls of Congress, not around the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Truth is the Go-Dayrit tussle, an offshoot of a previous fight for the presidency of the POC, has become the main event in our national sports arena.

The snub put up by the Teng Kok gang has definitely shamed Dayrit during the last general assembly of the POC.

But just when Teng Kok was hollering hip-hip-hooray, Dayrit was able to convince at least a couple of NSAs to swear that their absence in the POC general meeting was not meant as a boycott.

Last heard of, both camps were rearming for a brewing next encounter.

And practically all the maneuverings are being played up in our national sports pages.

Nothing wrong? Everything normal?

Maybe, but it has also become clear that these dirty personal tussles around Rizal Memorial have slowly turned the sports page into what looks like a political section.

* * *

A pity. Because, there used to be a sweet, happy season when the sports page mainly bannered the golden, shining achievements of sports stars.

We remember the young Bibit Duavit, then head of the Department of Youth and Sports Development (DYSD), telling officers of the National Sportswriters Association of the Philippines during its 1979 awards night how he loved to lionize the sports page.

To make sure he started the day right, Duavit said he would first turn to the back page.

Why? Because unlike Page One which regularly hollered with miseries, fights, bickering, the sports page screamed with inspiring golden feats of great players.

Well, we could only condole with Mr. Duavit. He's not the only one ruing that death of the old sports page.

* * *

Even editors of big national sports dailies, including our highly respected chief, Ms Letty Magsanoc, have started to wonder why the sports page is often dominated by stories on personal feuds, political scrimmages among national sports leaders.

Reported PDI's Marc Anthony Reyes yesterday: "Vowing to bring peace and unity back to a quarrel-plagued association, newly elected Philippine Weightlifting Association president Monico Puentevella assured both warring factions will have roles to play under his administration."

Now, in case you don't know, Puentevella, a former commissioner of the PSC, is now a member of the House of Representatives.

So who can deny that the Rizal Memorial, our national sports arena, has itself become a shameless training ground, an academy for future politicians?

It has a long roster of raging graduates.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

All Digital Sound

GLORIETTA 1
formerly QUAD

1 DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND

2 BLACK HAWK DOWN
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

3 KAHIT IKAW, AY ISANG PANAGINIP
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

4 MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GLORIETTA 4

1 THE OTHERS
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

2 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

3 BLACK HAWK DOWN THX
In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND

4 AMERICAN ADOBO
In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
Art Film

5 HEARTS IN ATLANTIS
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

6 BLACK HAWK DOWN
In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND

7 DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1 THE GOLDEN BOWL (Advance Screening)
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

2 BLACK HAWK DOWN
In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND

3 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

4 PROMISES PROMISES
FEB. 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 - 9PM
Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN THX
In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND

2 DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

3 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

4 KUNG IKAW AY ISANG PANAGINIP
In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

5 HEARTS IN ATLANTIS
In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS) MARSHALL DICK
2 (SDDS) THE LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS) FROM HELL
4 GOLD (DTS) OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5 GOLD (DOLBY) VANILLA SKY
6 GOLD (SDDS) KATE & LEOPOLD
7 GOLD (DOLBY) BLACK HAWK DOWN
8 ISANG PANAGINIP
9 REBULOSYONARYO
10 THE OTHERS

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1 KAULAYAW
2
3 (DTS) FROM HELL
4
5 HUSTLER
6 (DTS) BLACK HAWK DOWN
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1 HUSTLER
2 KAULAYAW
3 REBULOSYONARYO

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1 FROM HELL
2 BLACK HAWK DOWN
3 HUSTLER
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) MARSHALL DICK
5 KAULAYAW

METROPOLIS star
Tel. 850 4285

1 MARSHALL DICK
2 BLACK HAWK DOWN
3 ISANG PANAGINIP
4 KAULAYAW
5 VANILLA SKY
6 KATE & LEOPOLD
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) Tel. 7512010 to 13

1 VANILLA SKY

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 ISANG PANAGINIP
2 DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1
2 HUSTLER
3 KAULAYAW

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1 HUSTLER
A KAULAYAW

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 KAULAYAW
2 HUSTLER
3 ISANG PANAGINIP
4 BLACKHAWK DOWN

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY) VANILLA SKY
2
3
4 HUSTLER
5 KATE & LEOPOLD
6 KAULAYAW
7 (DTS) FROM HELL
8 (SDDS) BLACK HAWK DOWN
9 (DOLBY) MARSHALL DICK

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2 KAULAYAW

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 VANILLA SKY
2 ISANG PANAGINIP
3 REBULOSYONARYO
4 (SDDS) KATE & LEOPOLD
5 MARSHALL DICK
6 (DOLBY) BLACK HAWK DOWN
7 (DTS) FROM HELL
8 HUSTLER
9 KAULAYAW

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS) FROM HELL
2 ISANG PANAGINIP
3 KAULAYAW
4 HUSTLER
5 (SDDS) BLACK HAWK DOWN
6 REBULOSYONARYO
7 (DOLBY) VANILLA SKY
8 KATE & LEOPOLD

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 REBULOSYONARYO
2 KAULAYAW
3 (DTS) FROM HELL
4 HUSTLER
5 (SDDS) VANILLA SKY

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 REBULOSYONARYO

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1 REBULOSYONARYO

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson
Lords KAULAYAW
Jennet HUSTLER

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 FROM HELL
2 KAULAYAW
3 HUSTLER

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3 KAULAYAW

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 VANILLA SKY
3 FROM HELL
4 ISANG PANAGINIP
5 REBULOSYONARYO

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1 REBULOSYONARYO
2 KAULAYAW
3 HUSTLER
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 FROM HELL

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)
2

Berma
tel 879.2029

1 KAULAYAW
2 HUSTLER

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1 HUSTLER
2 FROM HELL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1 ISANG PANAGINIP
2 KAULAYAW
3 (DTS) VANILLA SKY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 ISANG PANAGINIP
2 (DTS) KATE & LEOPOLD
3 (DOLBY) VANILLA SKY
4 FROM HELL

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 ISANG PANAGINIP
2 (DOLBY) VANILLA SKY
3 (DTS) FROM HELL
4 KATE & LEOPOLD

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 ISANG PANAGINIP
2 BURLESK KING
3 SOON TO OPEN
4 SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MovieTown
TEL. (045) 9821729 (Tarlac)

1 AMERICAN ADOBO
2 FINAL ANSWER
3 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING
4 (DTS) OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) HUSTLER
2 KAULAYAW
3
4 (DTS) MARSHALL DICK

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 VANILLA SKY
3 (DTS) FROM HELL
4 ISANG PANAGINIP
5 KATE & LEOPOLD

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 ISANG PANAGINIP
2 VANILLA SKY
3 KATE & LEOPOLD

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1 FROM HELL
2 VANILLA SKY
3 KATE & LEOPOLD

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 ISANG PANAGINIP
3 AMERICAN ADOBO

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1 FROM HELL
2
3

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS) ISANG PANAGINIP
2 (DTS)

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 ISANG PANAGINIP
3 AMERICAN ADOBO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 AMERICAN ADOBO
2 BLACK HAWK DOWN
3 ISANG PANAGINIP
4 FINAL ANSWER

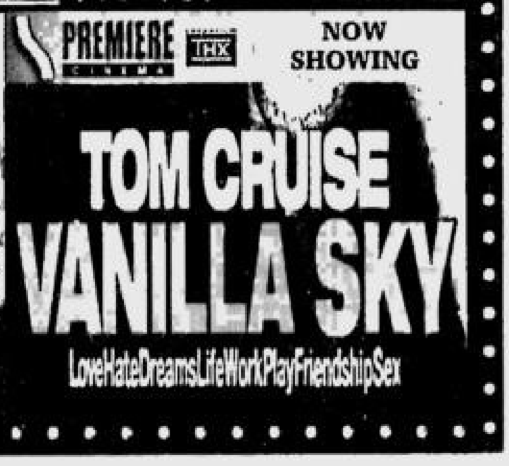
Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 ISANG PANAGINIP
3 VANILLA SKY
4 (DTS ES) SUMMER CATCH

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

CMG INTERNATIONAL



PREMIERE CINEMA THX
NOW SHOWING
TOM CRUISE
VANILLA SKY
LoveHateDreamsLifeWorkPlayFriendshipSex

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State-Of-The-Art-Cinemas
NOW SHOWING
e-mail: hto@netasia-mnl.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA
632-9115-16 / 633-7941 loc. 276

THX

1 VANILLA SKY
2 VANILLA SKY
3 KATE AND LEOPOLD
4 MARSHALL DICK
5 BLACK HAWAK DOWN
6 FROM HELL
7 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8 ISANG PANAGINIP
9 REBULOSYONARYO
10 THE OTHERS

ERMITA
536-7809 TO 12

1 VANILLA SKY
2 MARSHALL DICK
3 ISANG PANAGINIP
4 KATE AND LEOPOLD
5 REBULOSYONARYO
6 BLACK HAWK DOWN
7 FROM HELL

METRO EAST
#682-8103, #682-8193

1 MARSHALL DICK
2 VANILLA SKY
OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3 FROM HELL
BLACK HAWK DOWN
4 ISANG PANAGINIP
KATE AND LEOPOLD
5 REBULOSYONARYO

NOVALICHES
936-3229 to 31

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 VANILLA SKY
3 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4 KATE AND LEOPOLD
5 ISANG PANAGINIP
6 FROM HELL
7 MARSHALL DICK
8 LORD OF THE RINGS

IMUS
(046) 471-3100

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 MARSHALL DICK
3 ISANG PANAGINIP
4 VANILLA SKY
5 FROM HELL
6 KAULAYAW

BACOLOD
(034) 441-0453 / 0459

1 LORD OF THE RINGS
2 LORD OF THE RINGS
3 ISANG PANAGINIP
4 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5 BLACK HAWK DOWN
6 BUKO PANDAN

ILOILO
(033) 330-8077 / 8078

1 AMERICAN ADOBO
2 BLACK HAWK DOWN
3 ZOOLANDER
4 LORD OF THE RINGS
5 FINAL ANSWER
6 GIRL FEVER

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	FINAL ANSWER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	ISANG PANAGINIP
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	VANILLA SKY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	BLACK HAWK DOWN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	FROM HELL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	KATE AND LEOPOLD
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	MARSHALL DICK
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	KAULAYAW
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	HUSTLER
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SISID / TAILS OF EROTIKA
ODEON	FROM HELL
ODEON-2	MARSHALL DICK
ROBEN	KAULAYAW
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	DON'T SAY A WORD / GHOST FROM MARS

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	KAULAYAW
REMAR	KAULAYAW
REMAR-2	BLACK HAWK DOWN

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	HUSTLER
B	KAULAYAW
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	FROM HELL
CINEMA-2	VANILLA SKY

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	REBULOSYONARYO
CINEMA-2	MAY PAG IBIG PA KAYA
CINEMA-3	KAULAYAW
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
CINEMA-6	FINAL ANSWER
CINEMA-7	HUSTLER
CINEMA-8	HEARTS IN ATLANTIS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	VANILLA SKY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	FROM HELL
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	BLACK HAWKDOWN
CINEMA-12	KATE & LEOPOLD
CINEMA-14	MARSHALL DICK
CINEMA-15	ISANG PANAGINIP

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
CINEMA-2	KATE & LEOPOLD
CINEMA-3	BLACK HAWK DOWN
CINEMA-4	FROM HELL
CINEMA-5	MARSHALL DICK
CINEMA-6	VANILLA SKY

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173869

1 REBULOSYONARYO
2 KATE & LEOPOLD
3 BLACK HAWK DOWN
4 FROM HELL
5 VANILLA SKY
6 ISANG PANAGINIP
7 MARSHALL DICK
8 KAULAYAW

SM CENTERPOINT
7140522 -7161416

1 ISANG PANAGINIP
2 FINAL ANSWER
3 VANILLA SKY
4 MARSHALL DICK
5 BLACK HAWK DOWN
6 REBULOSYONARYO
7 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8 FROM HELL
9 KATE & LEOPOLD
10 KAULAYAW

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 MARSHALL DICK
2 FINAL ANSWER
3 REBULOSYONARYO
4 VANILLA SKY
5 KATE & LEOPOLD
6 MAY PAG IBIG PA KAYA
7 BLACK HAWK DOWN
8 FROM HELL
9 ISANG PANAGINIP
10 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
11 AMERICAN ADOBO
12 KAULAYAW

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3 FROM HELL
4 KATE & LEOPOLD
5 THE OTHERS
6 VANILLA SKY
7 FINAL ANSWER
8 AMERICAN ADOBO
9 ISANG PANAGINIP
10 MAY PAG IBIG PA KAYA
11 MARSHALL DICK
12 REBULOSYONARYO

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1 THE OTHERS
2 KATE & LEOPOLD
3 BLACK HAWKDOWN
4 VANILLA SKY
5 MARSHALL DICK
6 FROM HELL
7 FINAL ANSWER
8 REBULOSYONARYO
9 ISANG PANAGINIP
10 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
11 KAULAYAW
12 HUSTLER

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 FROM HELL
2 MARSHALL DICK
3 REBULOSYONARYO
4 ISANG PANAGINIP
5 KATE & LEOPOLD
6 VANILLA SKY
7 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8 BLACK HAWK DOWN
9 AMERICAN ADOBO
10 MAY PAG IBIG PA KAYA
11 FINAL ANSWER
12 THE OTHERS

SM SOUTHMALL
8066088 • 8066782

1 MARSHALL DICK
2 FROM HELL
3 VANILLA SKY
4 KATE & LEOPOLD
5 KAULAYAW
6 FINAL ANSWER
7 ISANG PANAGINIP
8 BLACK HAWK DOWN
9 OCEAN'S ELEVEN
10 REBULOSYONARYO

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 KATE & LEOPOLD
2 EARTHQUAKE
3 VANILLA SKY
4 LORD OF THE RINGS
5 ISANG PANAGINIP
6 CORKY ROMANO
7 BLACK HAWK DOWN
8 FINAL ANSWER

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 FINAL ANSWER
2 CLOSED
3 BLACK HAWK DOWN
4 LORD OF THE RINGS
5 AMERICAN ADOBO
6 GIRL FEVER
7 CLOSED
8 ZOOLANDER

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 THE OTHERS
3 FINAL ANSWER
4 VANILLA SKY
5 HEARTS IN ATLANTIS
6 ISANG PANAGINIP

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8204975

1 KATE & LEOPOLD
2 BLACK HAWK DOWN
3 VANILLA SKY
4 ISANG PANAGINIP

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820905

1 VANILLA SKY
2 KAULAYAW
3 REBULOSYONARYO

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 VANILLA SKY
2 KATE & LEOPOLD
3 REBULOSYONARYO
4 ISANG PANAGINIP

SM CITY DAVAO
2974004

1 BLACK HAWK DOWN
2 KATE & LEOPOLD
3 LORD OF THE RINGS
4 ZOOLANDER
5 FINAL ANSWER
6 HEARTS IN ATLANTIS

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4
SOON TO OPEN! 4 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4
SOON TO OPEN! 4 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

THE PODIUM
16 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City

1
2
SOON TO OPEN!
2 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

6389781-85

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

Wanted: other Nida witnesses

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE NEW witness in the Nida Blanca case who is now in the hands of the National Bureau of Investigation has given his sworn statement to the bureau, but the NBI is looking for other witnesses who can corroborate his statement.

Lawyer Ricardo Diaz, NBI Interpol chief and spokesman for the Blanca investigation, said the bureau is courting some persons the witness named in his affidavit and will ask more questions from the witness about what really happened on the night the popular actress was killed.

"We could get the statements of those persons who were not a party to the crime (but were mentioned in his affidavit)," Diaz said. "They and other (pieces of) evidence should corroborate what he said. "I also believe that he has more things to say. I read the affidavit and I think that he could clear up more issues."

Diaz said the witness signed the sworn affidavit over the weekend after apparently getting adequate assurance from the NBI that he and his family would be secured.

The witness had been reluctant to give an affidavit for fear of his personal safety and the security of his family, Diaz said.

He declined to identify the witness and the details of his affidavit since more disclosures could "unduly alert the people involved."

Earlier, Diaz said that the witness claimed that a "big group" was behind Blanca's killing.

But he declined to comment if Blanca's husband, Rod Lauren Strunk, were mentioned in the affidavit.

Diaz said the NBI found the witness "credible" and that he passed the bureau's credibility tests.

"He is in possession of information that we have yet to divulge to the public. And he just did not come out of the blue," Diaz said.

Earlier, Diaz said the new witness supplied the bureau with the "missing facts" that showed where Blanca went and what happened to her after she left the Movie, Television Review and Classification Board office at the Atlanta Centre Building on Nov. 6.

Blanca was found dead from several stab wounds inside her Nissan Sedan in the parking space on the sixth floor of the building the following day.

The witness told the NBI that he knew of what happened through conversations and phone calls with the other persons behind the murder.

An NBI source said that once the information given by the witness were confirmed, persons who were previously linked to the crime might again find themselves in hot water.

A NATURAL TOUR
Another boy band from the United States, called Natural, arrives in Manila for a campus and mall tour. Ben Bledsoe, J Horn, Michael Johnson, Patrick King Jr. and Marc Terenzi will be at SM Manila at 6 p.m. today, Robinsons Galleria at 5 p.m. tomorrow, and the Assumption College fair at 5 p.m. on Friday. They will be accompanied by star maker Lou Perlman, of the firm that made huge acts out of Backstreet Boys and Nsync. ROGER MARGALLO

Student snatched in parking lot of Ermita church

By Philip C. Tubeza

A FEMALE student of the Adamson University was reportedly kidnapped yesterday afternoon in a church parking lot at the back of the university in Ermita, Manila.

Police said an unidentified man, described as aged 30 to 40 years and about 5-foot-7, was seen forcing the unidentified student into a dark green Toyota Revo at the parking lot of St. Vincent De Paul Church on San Marcelino Street.

Ermita Police Station investigators said three male Adamson students saw the abduction about 2 p.m. yesterday.

The witnesses told police that the suspect, who was unarmed, dragged the victim, who was still in her uniform, and forced her into the Revo, with plate number WDY-120.

The victim cried for help, shouting "Help! I don't know this man," police said.

But the suspect allegedly shouted to bystanders that the victim was his wife.

Parking lot guard Jose Darwin Orbis told reporters that he ordered the Revo to stop. Orbis said when the van stopped, he caught a glimpse of the victim inside after the suspect pulled down the window.

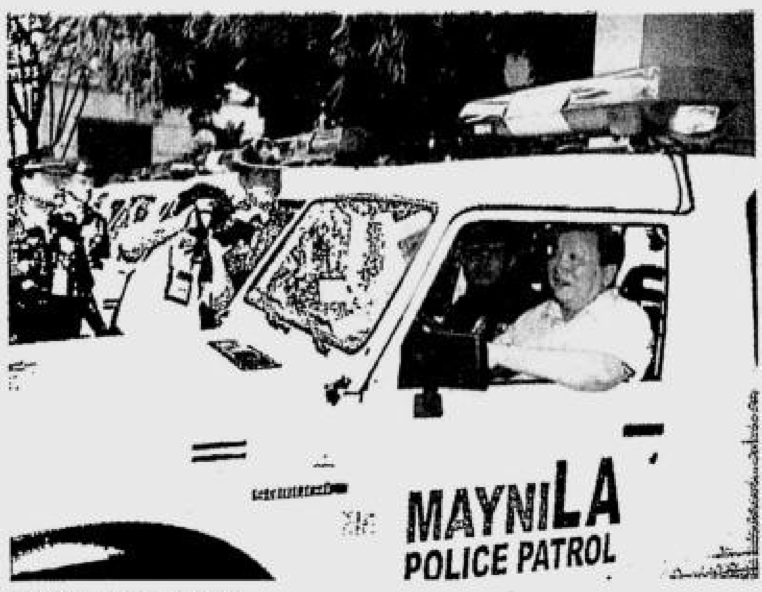
The guard said the victim had bruise marks near her eye and bloodstains on her lips.

The suspect told Orbis that the student was his wife before he drove off on San Marcelino heading south.

Police said as of press time yesterday that they have yet to receive a complaint from the victim's family.

Some witnesses allegedly told policemen that they saw the student and the man talking before he dragged her away.

The Western Police District has alerted all stations and traffic enforcers to be on the lookout for the Revo.



JEEPS FOR COPS
Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and the Western Police District director, Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos, test-drive one of 20 new Suzuki Samurai patrol jeeps turned over by the local government to the city's police force, which now has 100 police cars and jeeps and 20 patrol vans.

St. Theresa's homecoming

ST. THERESA'S College Manila will hold a homecoming, "The Wise Wonderful Women of St. Theresa's College Manila," on Saturday, Feb. 9, 5:30 p.m. at the Shangri-La Makati Ballroom.

Participating jubilarians are platinum and college 1937, diamond high school and college 1942, emerald high school 1947, golden high school and college 1952, sapphire high school and college 1957, ruby high school and college 1962, coral high school and college 1967, pearl high school 1972 and the hosts; silver high school 1977.

Theresians and their guests will be treated to a dinner-show featuring Theresians. Tickets are P650 each.

The event will start with a Mass at 5:30 p.m. to be followed by dinner at 7 p.m. and the show at 8 p.m.

Dancing and a raffle of prizes will cap the event.

At stake in the raffle are cash prizes of P50,000, P30,000 and P20,000.

Nieves Sanches will donate two US$250, five $100 and four P2,500 cash prizes. Raffle tickets cost P100 each.

For reservations and payments, contact Ressy Benedicto at 740-1810, Connie Vesagas at 632-1577 or Cecile Perlas at 372-0601.

The STAA e-mail address is STAAManila@yahoo.com.

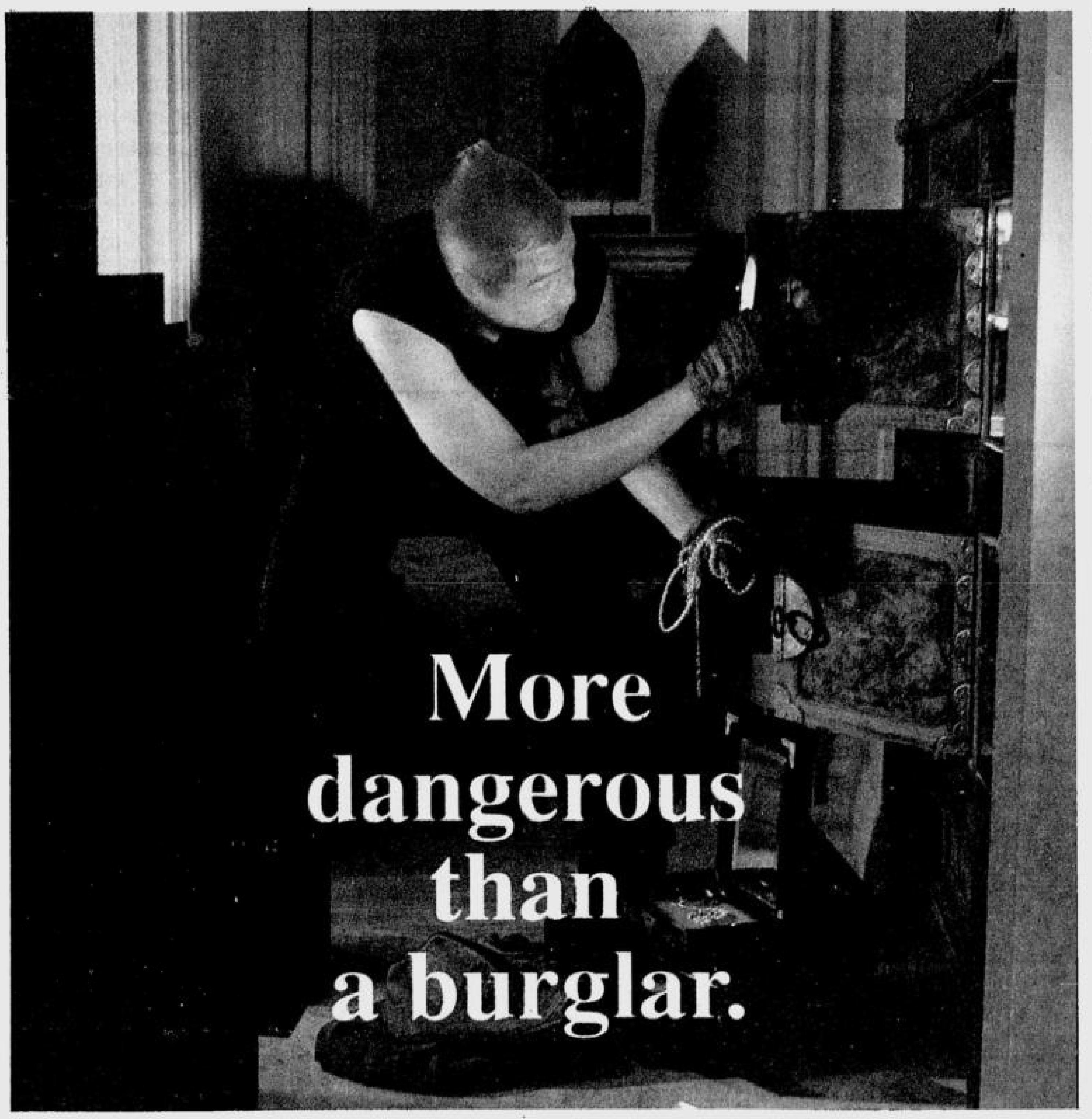
Exams for grade schoolers

THE MSA Academic Advancement Institute will give qualifying exams to grade school students on Feb. 9 and 16.

This is to prepare the students for the second screening review for entrance tests to Philippine Science High School. Only those who passed the first screening may take the exams.

The top 10 students who pass the qualifying exams will automatically be given scholarships by MSA. This entitles them to free tuition and free MSA review books for their personal use.

For details, call 925-7544, 925-7216 or 434-3693.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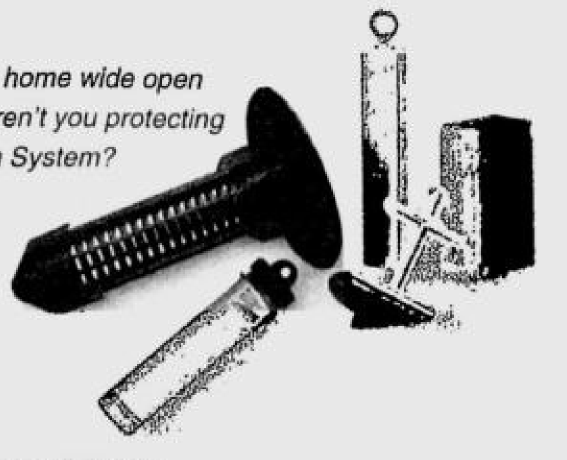

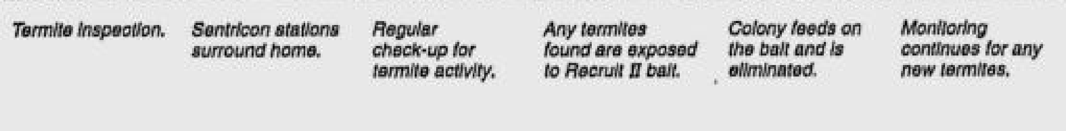

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Tingas, Cayetanos in 'white paper war'

By Christian V. Esguerra

THERE is a war on in Taguig, and town residents are caught in the middle of the petty, yet costly, squabble between the families of two top politicians who are said to be battling to claim credit for municipal projects.

In the past two weeks, Mayor Sigfrido Tinga and Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano have been locked in a verbal clash that has spilled into the town's narrow streets, where hundreds of white papers have been circulating.

One white paper accused Tinga of blocking the construction of a P25-million sports complex funded by Cayetano and his father, administration Sen. Renato Cayetano.

The paper described the mayor as a man "without disposition," who merely follows the orders of his father, former Rep. Dante Tinga.

"It just shows the character of the people (behind the white paper)," Mayor Tinga yesterday told reporters.

Another white paper in support of the mayor later came out. This paper accused the younger Cayetano of derailing the progress of Taguig.

"This problem goes way back," Taguig's public information officer Ana Santos said, referring to the feud between the political clans.

Feud includes trading barbs over billboards

But Santos added that the rift is more pronounced now because the "Cayetanos and the Tingas belong to opposing political parties."

The two second-generation politicians have also traded barbs on public billboards.

Two weeks ago, Rep. Cayetano reportedly posted a billboard claiming that the covered basketball court in Lower Bicutan was his project.

But according to Santos, Cayetano funded only the roof of the court.

"The project as a whole was sponsored by the elder Tinga when he was still a congressman," Santos said.

To settle the issue, the younger Tinga said he put up two separate billboards bearing his name and that of Cayetano.

But Cayetano allegedly destroyed the signs on the same day they were posted, according to the mayor.

"(Cayetano) should give credit where credit is due," Mayor Tinga said.

Cayetano could not be reached for comment at press time.

The latest casualty in the Tinga-Cayetano rift is the planned construction of the P2.9-billion road dike ***(See related story, Page A21)***.

Funded by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the project is deemed as the ultimate solution to the long-running flood problem in Taguig, Pateros, Pasig, and a portion of Rizal.

But construction has been "suspended" following a barrage of complaints from Cayetano and "some small groups," Tinga said.

Yesterday, Tinga, along with the mayors of Pateros and Pasig, met with Malacañang officials to settle the issue.

The Palace got wind of the issue probably through Senator Cayetano and his congressman son, according to Santos.

"I don't know what they (critics) want to accomplish here," Tinga said, referring to the protests over the mega-dike construction. "Nobody wins here. This is obviously some politicians' way of gaining political mileage."

Napolcom stops transfers

By Jerome Aning

THE ORGANIZATION of non-commissioned Manila policemen scored a major victory after the National Police Commission recently ordered a halt to the transfer of policemen for being frequently late or absent in roll-call formations or for not wearing the proper uniform.

The Napolcom also ordered director Edgardo Aglipay of the National Capital Regional Police Office, as well as district and regional police chiefs, to return all reassigned and transferred policemen to their original units.

Aglipay imposed the disciplinary measure on policemen found to be frequently absent or late in roll-call formations or do not wear their complete uniform.

In the Western Police District alone, 400 policemen were punished and assigned to other police units, some as far as Bicol and Cagayan Valley.

The Manila's Finest Brotherhood Association, composed of WPD members with the rank SPO4 and below, protested the measures and described the transfers as discriminatory.

On Jan. 17, the MFBA brought the matter to the Napolcom, the policy-making body of the Philippine National Police.

In a two-page memorandum dated Jan. 31, Napolcom vice chair and executive commissioner Rogelio Pureza said the right of policemen to due process was violated when they were not given prior notice and a summary hearing before being reassigned to other units.

Pureza said the reassignments "demonstrate military practices that contradict and undermine the 'civilian' character of the police force... and the supremacy of the civilian authority principle as provided by the Constitution."

"Moreover, the arbitrary transfer of PNP personnel to places where they are complete strangers is counter productive and violates the principle of assigning PNP members to places where they reside or nearest their residence," Pureza said.

The Napolcom official reminded PNP directors and supervisors that other PNP units should never be the dumping ground for "undesirables."

He said that if a cause for action does exist against any erring policeman, then appropriate administrative charges must first be filed. The corresponding punishment may only be meted after a hearing and observing of administrative procedures.

He said a preventative suspension of not more than 90 days may be imposed upon a respondent PNP member "only after determination of probable cause upon the termination of a pre-charge investigation."

Groups seek Abalos ouster

By Alcuin Papa

TRANSPORT groups yesterday called for the resignation of Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos and traffic officials over the planned increase in traffic fines.

The Pinagka-isahang Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (Piston) and the Inter-Metro Bus Operators Association (Imboa) threatened to stage a nationwide jeepney strike and said Abalos should find long-term solutions to Metro Manila's traffic problems or resign his position immediately.

"Increasing the fines for traffic violations is not the solution," Piston president Medardo Roda said, adding that Abalos should resign because traffic in the city has worsened.

Roda pointed out that traffic enforcers would have a field day and issue traffic citation tickets to motorists at the slightest provocation. Traffic enforcers are entitled to 30 percent of the fine from each violator they catch.

IMBOA president Claire de la Fuente said Abalos should train MMDA traffic enforcers in traffic management instead of coming up with schemes to raise the agency's collection of fines.

De la Fuente said the increase would just be another burden for operators and public transport drivers who continuously suffer from the increasing prices of fuel and spare parts.

"What do they want to accomplish," De la Fuente said. "Do they want to starve the families of our drivers? Why don't they just concentrate on improving the flow of traffic?"

She said transport groups are planning intensified and daily protest actions. "They (MMDA) don't know what they are up against," she warned. "This is a big blow to the transport industry."

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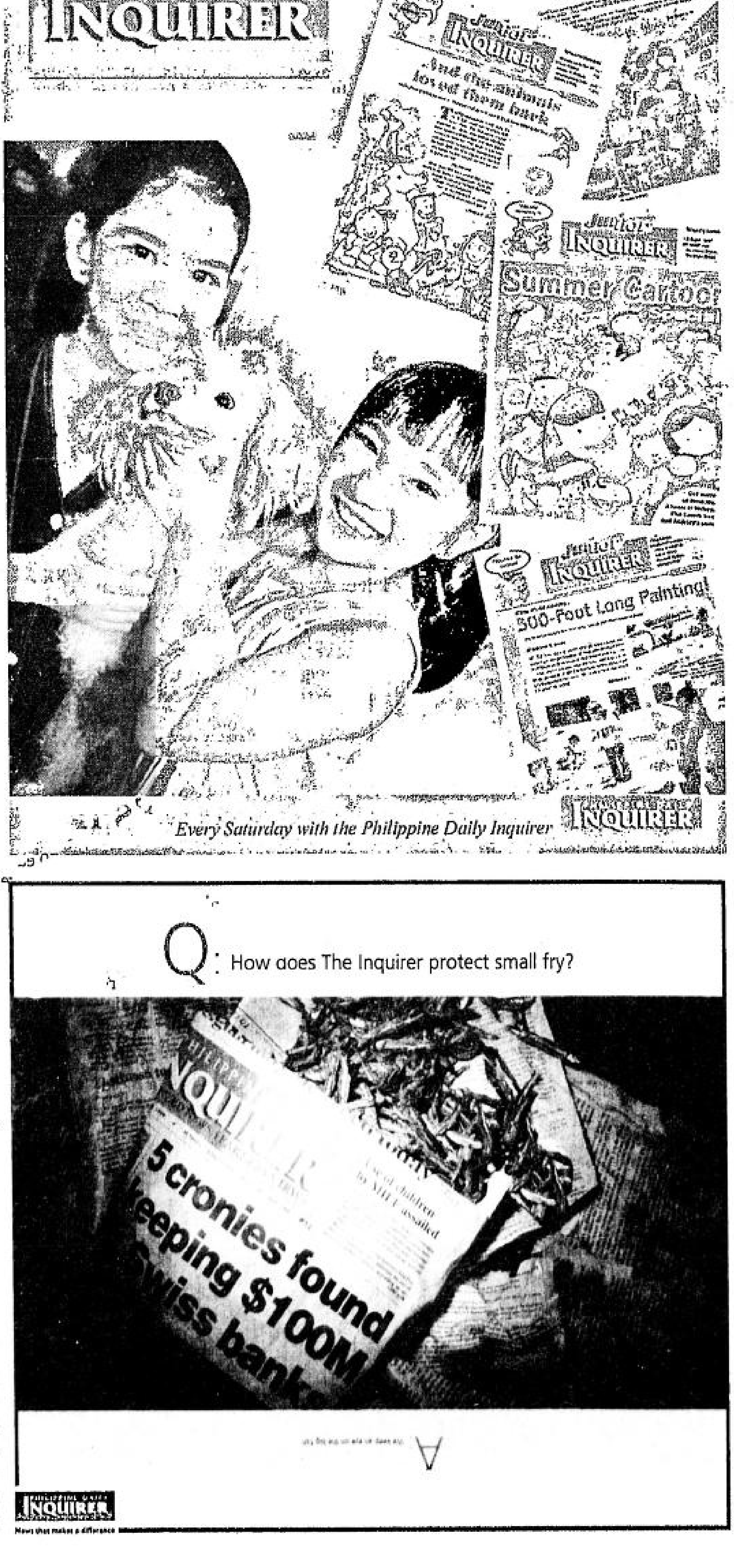
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6 LOGO EVOLVE1
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8 LOGO HEDGEHOG
9 LOGO BARCODE1
10 LOGO BOO!

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LOGO FIGTHER4
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LOGO SLIPPERS1

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PIC CHICKRUN
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PIC FLASHIT
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No More	*Ruff Ends*	TONE NOMORE
No Ordinary Morning	*Chicane*	TONE NOORDINARY
Rewind	*Craig David*	TONE REWIND
Sunday Morning	*Bolshoi*	TONE SUNDAYMORN
Two Rivers		TONE 2RIVERS
When It's Over	*Sugar Ray*	TONE WHENOVER
Sandstorm		TONE SANDSTORM

Top ten ring tones:

1	Lady Marmalade	*Christina Aguilera*	TONE MARMALADE
2	Smooth Criminal	*Alien Ant Farm*	TONE SMOOTHCRI
3	Butterfly	*Crazy Town*	TONE BUTTERFLY
4	Let it be	*Beatles*	TONE LETITBE
5	Michelle	*Beatles*	TONE MICHELLE
6	Pagdating ng Panahon	*Aiza Seguerra*	TONE PAGDATING
7	That's Why	*Gary Valenciano*	TONE THATSWHY
8	Saranggola ni Pepe	*Celeste Legaspi*	TONE SARANGGOLA
9	Superman	*Five For Fighting*	TONE SUPERMANS
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ADRIANA Nieto as Natalia

'Jose Rizal' . . .

(From page A28)

'Night Visions'

"NIGHT Visions" debuts on Feb. 7 at 9:30 on Studio 23. The collection of creepy short tales is hosted by punk-rock musician **Henry Rollins**. It is inspired by classic shows on the paranormal and supernatural like "The Twilight Zone," "Night Gallery" and "Alfred Hitchcock Presents."

In the pilot episode, **Aidan Quinn** plays an air-safety administrator who tries to reconnect with his dead daughter.

Other episodes star **Jay Mohr, Bridget Fonda, Lou Diamond Phillips, Kelly Rutherford** and **Thora Birch**. Episode directors include **Joe Dante, Yves Simoneau** and **Tobe Hooper**.

New telenovela

VIVA TV on IBC-13 will telecast the new telenovela, "Natlaia," at 10 p.m. from Monday to Friday, starting Feb. 11. It stars **Adriana Nieto** as Natalia and **Juan Soler** as Enrique.

Natalia is a beautiful and rebellious 17-year-old student who faces up to a cruel stepmother, a sadistic headmistress, and nasty rivals in an intercollegiate dance competition. To add to her woes, nobody approves of her romance with Enrique, a young psychologist.

Other IBC-13 telenovelas are "Carita de Angel" (12:30 to 1:30 p.m., Monday to Friday) and "Por un Beso" (replayed at 10:30 p.m., Monday to Friday).

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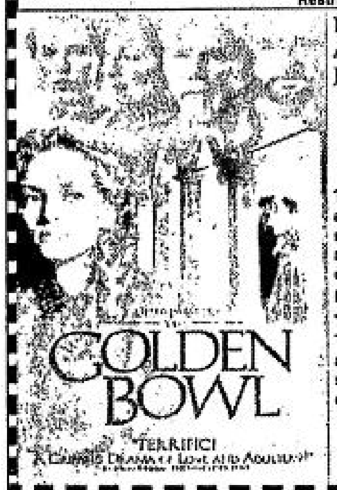

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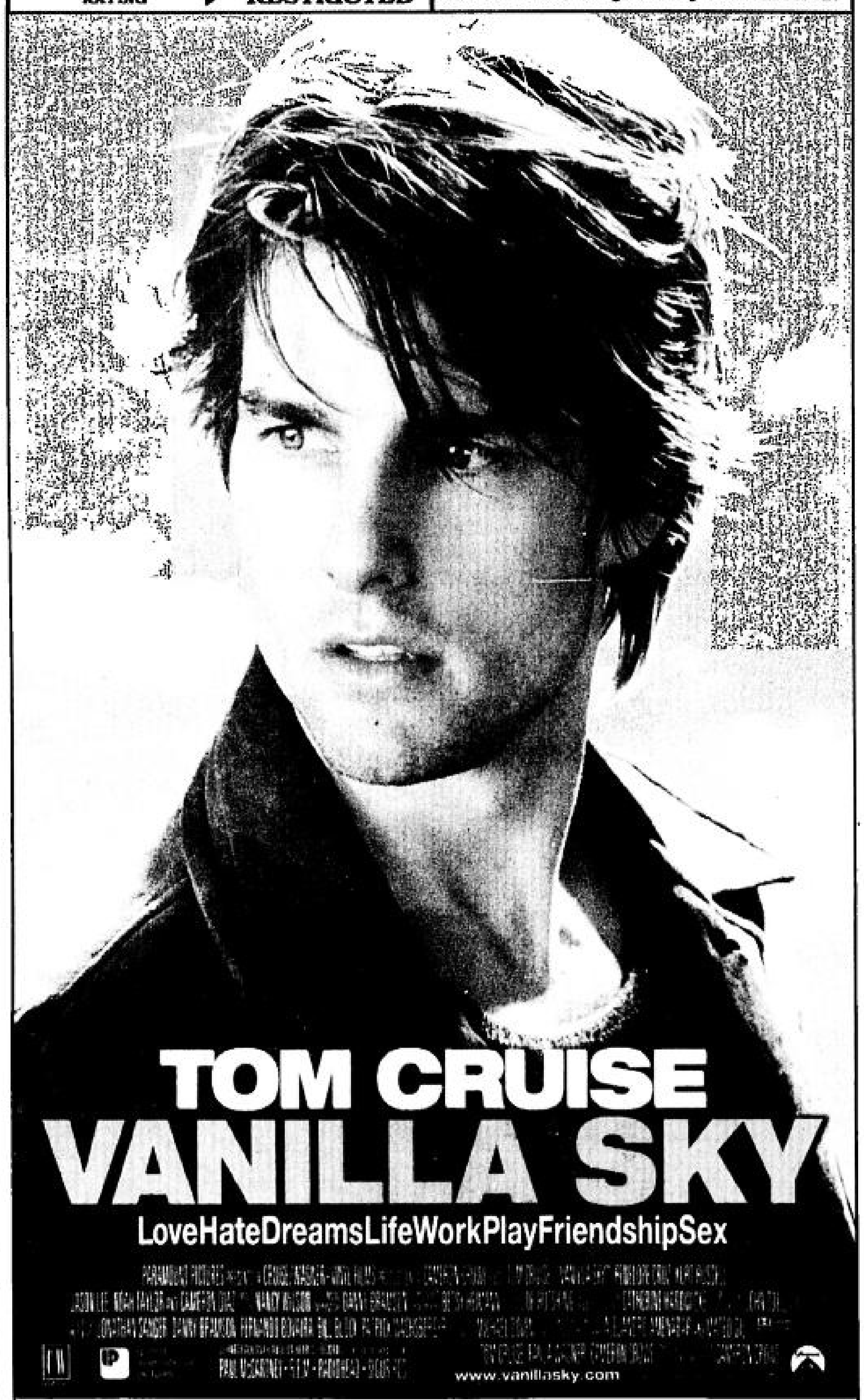

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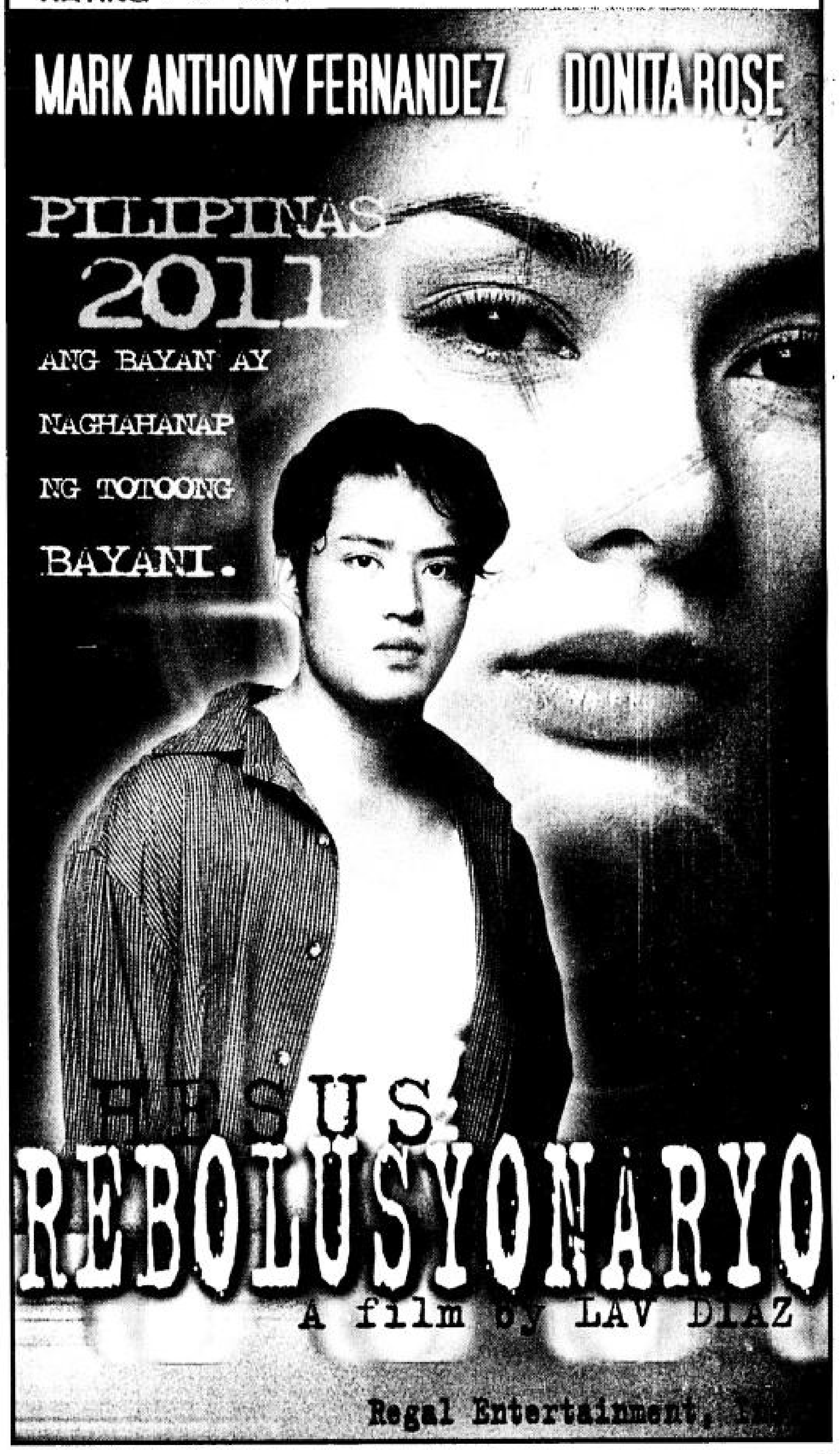

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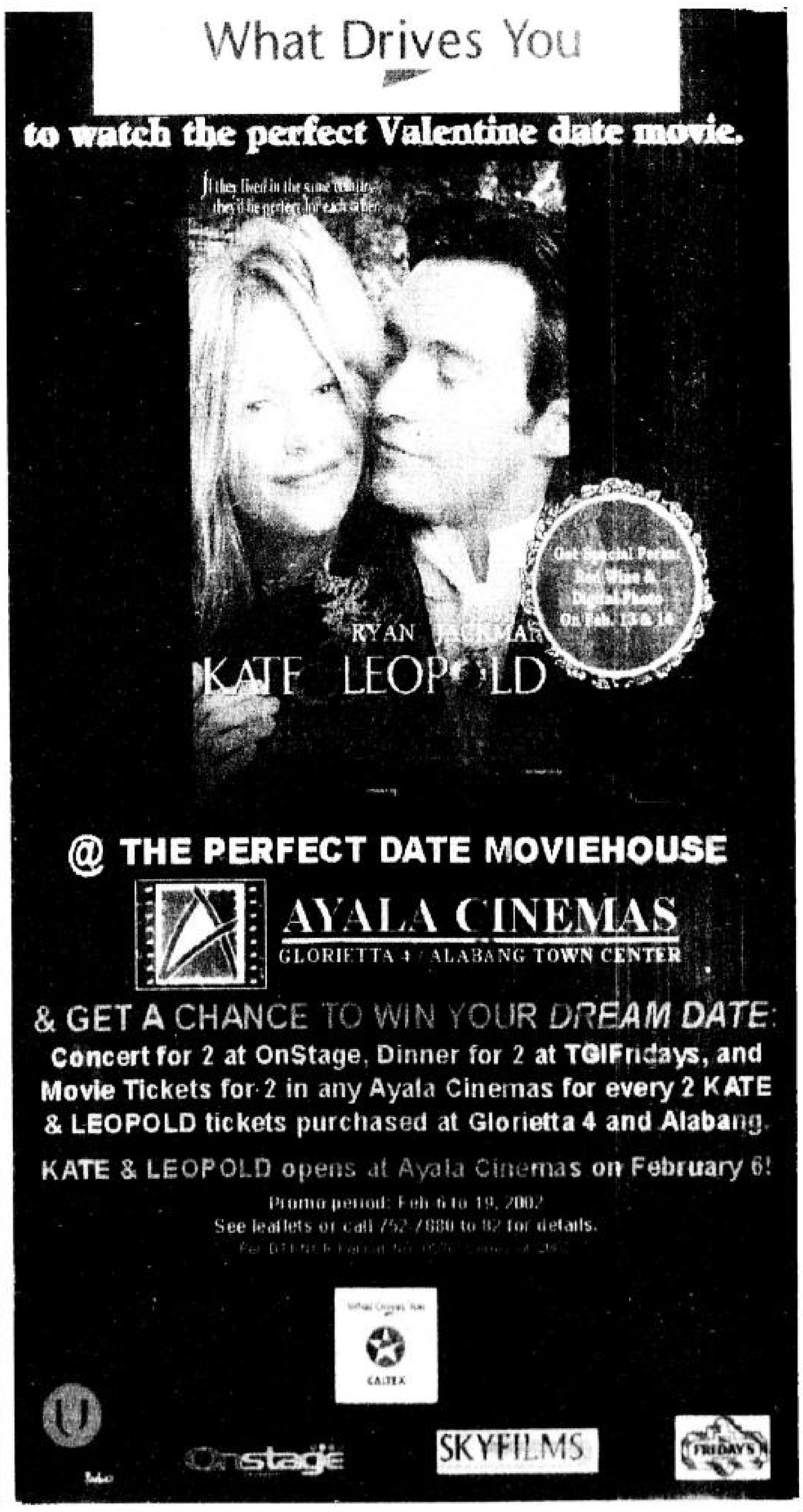

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'Jose Rizal' doing well in Japan

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE were heartened last week to receive a phone call from Ms **Reiko Iwanami** of Iwanami Hall in Tokyo, Japan. Iwanami Hall is Japan's most prestigious screening venue for outstanding films from all over the world, and it has been showing **Marilou Diaz-Abaya**'s "Jose Rizal" since last December.

"Jose Rizal" is the first Filipino movie to be honored with a months-long screening schedule at Iwanami, so we were anxious to find out how it was doing. Ms Iwanami had very encouraging news for us: the movie has been getting good audiences during its weekday screenings, and even more viewers during weekends.

Instructively, the movie's audience comes not just from Tokyo, but also from other parts of Japan. And its viewers are a good mix of mature people interested in history *and* young people who have been inspired by Rizal's heroism and genius.

Filipinos in Japan make up a sizable part of the audience, and they are justifiably proud of the national hero's current popularity in Tokyo, thanks to the boost provided by "Jose Rizal."

Finally, the movie is also being patronized by members of big Japanese cultural and ethical organizations like the Soka Gakkai and Ming-On, whose leaders admire Rizal's principles and achievements, and urge their many followers to watch the movie so they can learn how to emulate him.

After giving us the happy news from Tokyo, Ms Iwanami's asked us about Marilou's new film, "Bagong Buwan," and it was our turn to give her the good news that the film had been very well-received here, and was in fact the top grosser in last December's Metro Manila Film Festival.

Will "Bagong Buwan" also be tapped to play at Iwanami Hall later this year? Perhaps. But it may have to wait in line, because the follow-up Filipino movie to "Jose Rizal" could be another Diaz-Abaya film, "Muro-Ami," which has also acquired a strong cachet in Japan, thanks to its having been screened at some international filmfests in that country.

'Takbo Para sa Kalikasan 2002'

THE FIGHT to save the country's ecology gets another boost by way of radio station dzMM's "Takbo Para sa Kalikasan 2002" fun run on Feb. 17. The run will start at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park at 4 a.m.

The specific cause of this year's "Takbo" is the preservation and rehabilitation of the mangrove trees in Manila Bay. By paying a minimal registration fee for the 3K (kiddie), 5K and 10K runs, participants will contribute to dzMM's campaign. Prizes will be awarded to the top competitors.

Registration ends on Feb. 9. Call 924-2615.

JOSE/ A27

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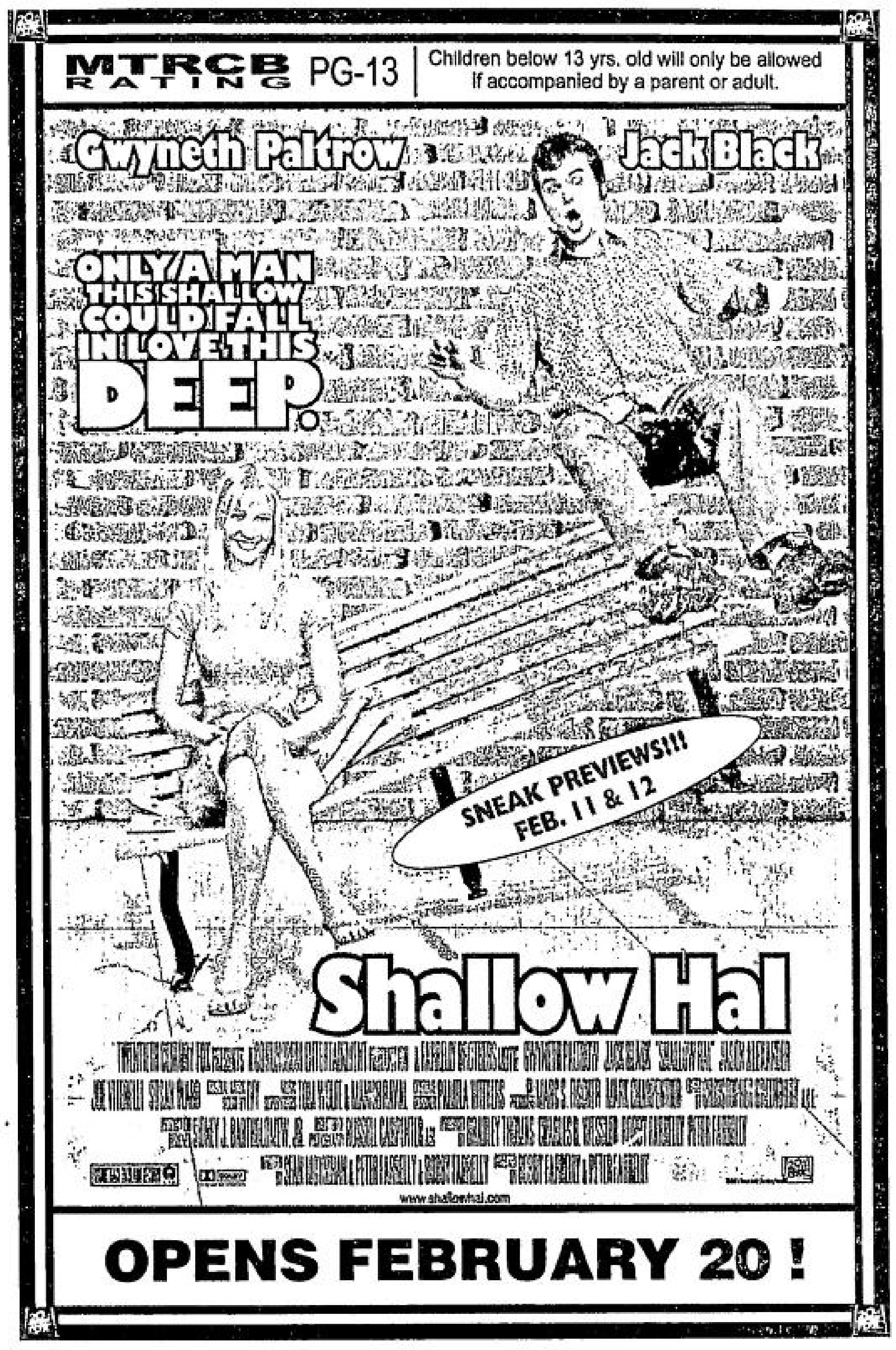
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FROM HELL - R 18 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	MARSHALL DICK - P 13 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:30	VANILLA SKY - R 18 11:30, 2:00, 4:40, 7:25, 10:10

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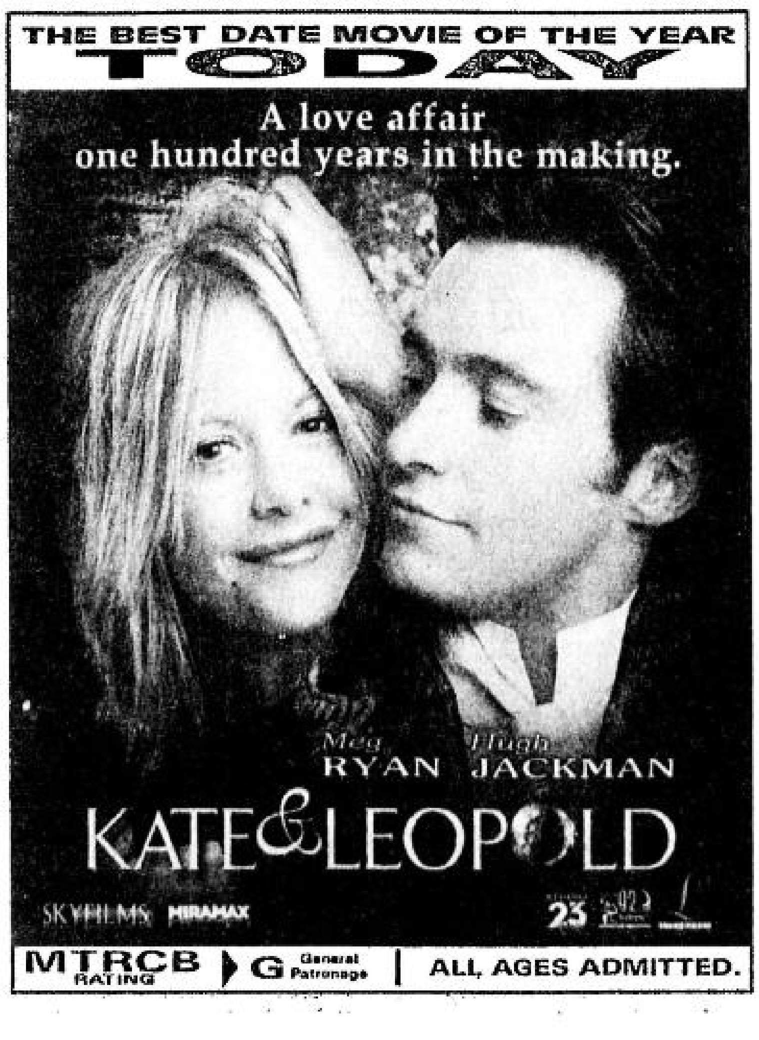
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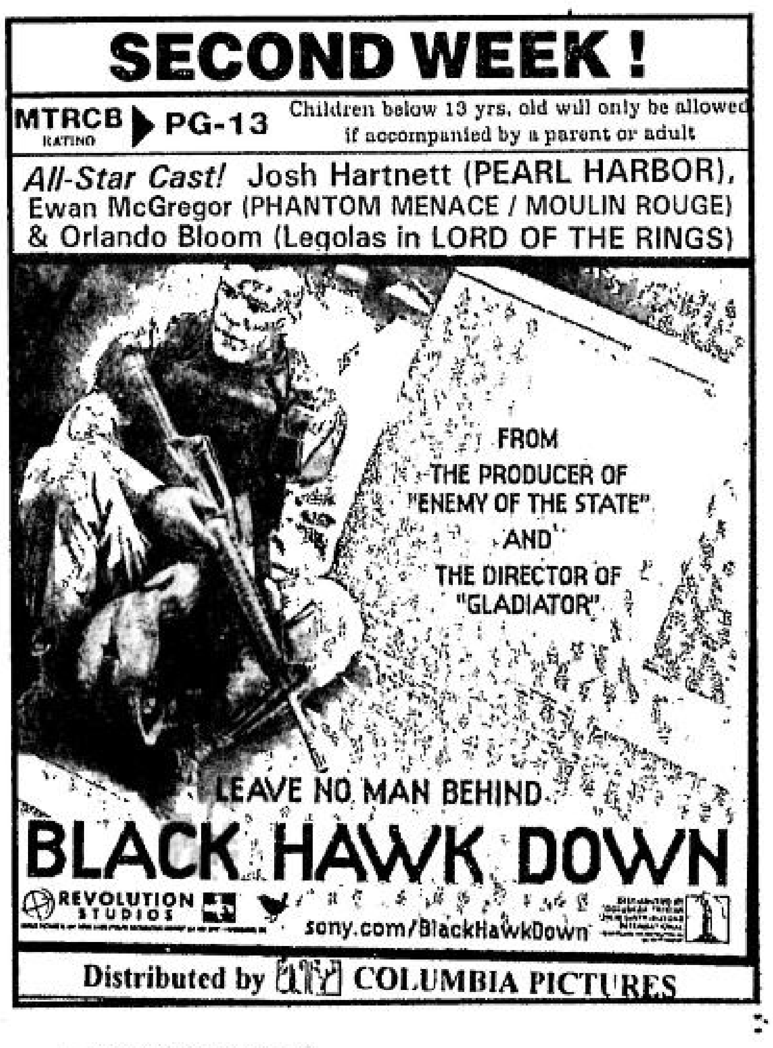
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

WESTLIFE. Favorite International Act

Big stars a no-show in Asia's 'biggest awards show'

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

MTV fans cast 13 million votes. And, weeks before the awards night, there was excitement over the loud buzz that it was going to be Asia's biggest awards show.

Many people expected the First MTV Asia Awards to be a blast, much like the annual Video Music Awards of MTV in the United States.

But the Asian counterpart turned out to be a big disappointment, with international winners a no-show at the ceremony in Singapore last Saturday night, a poor sound system, technical glitches and repeated takes for the performers.

The yawner was taped as live for three-and-a-half hours, punctuated by second-takes. The show was aired two hours later all over Southeast Asia.

Saturday, thousands trooped to the Singapore Indoor Stadium to watch the First MTV Asia Awards. All the winners, except for the winner of the Inspiration Award, were chosen by over 13 million MTV fans who voted through the Internet.

Aside from a handful of world famous artists such as show hosts **Ronan Keating** and **Mandy Moore**, plus Westlife, **Pink**, M2M and **Enrique Iglesias**, there were no other big stars.

Pink did manage to stir excitement for her energetic performance when she came on stage on board a motorcycle.

The opening salvo, with the all-female UK pop group Bond and the Saffri Duo sharing the stage, was not exciting enough to keep the show alive.

The international artists were paired with Asian talents from Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Philippines, China, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Indonesia to present the awards.

Tagalog speech

Regine Velasquez was named Favorite Artist-Philippines, besting **Lea Salonga, Martin Nievera, Gary Valenciano** and **Freestyle.** It was the first award to be presented that night, by the Irish pop quintet Westlife and Thai singer **Tata Young.**

Regine must have been so overwhelmed that she forgot to thank her recording company, Viva Records. In her acceptance speech, she even talked in Tagalog, *"Sa nanay ko at tatay ko, uuwi na 'ko bukas dyan,"* she said.

After accepting her award, she presented the award for Favorite Artist-Thailand with **Anggun**.

Then, Regine shared the spotlight with Mandy Moore when they did a duet of "Cry."

Regine apparently tried to control her trademark vocal histrionics when she sang. Otherwise, she could have easily upstaged Mandy. Although Mandy was obviously more popular, Regine was clearly the far better performer.

Regine had her share of screaming fans in Singapore, thanks to her recording with Hong Kong superstar **Jackie Cheung**.

Irrelevant

The show's script, if there was a script, was also off. When Regine went to the podium with Anggun, she said something like, "Isn't Anggun so beautiful?" Anggun replied, "Isn't Regine so beautiful?" The exchange was irrelevant and sounded silly.

Mandy Moore buckled and fumbled a number of times, even doing a Take 3 in one of her spiels.

When **Gary Valenciano** and MTV Asia veejay **Donita Rose** presented the nominees for Favorite Female Artist, their spiel was also irrelevant to the award.

Britney Spears was named Favorite Female Artist, **Ricky Martin** was Favorite Male Artist. Both were no-shows and gave only video messages.

Britney was busy filming her movie, "Crossroads," to be released in spring in the US.

Linkin Park, adjudged Favorite Breathrough Artist, was another no-show. When their award was presented, the huge video monitors broke down. And their message was also not properly cued.

Martial arts superstar **Jackie Chan**, the first recipient of the Inspiration Award, was a no-show, too.

So was **Bon Jovi**, Favorite Rock Artist. The award was presented by Pink and Indian veejay **Cyrus**.

Interpreter

Pink reappeared to present the Favorite Fashion Designer award to **Donatella Versace**, who made a grand entrance accompanied by two of her models.

Prior to the show, Donatella reportedly had her own party, with media guests from the region at Singapore's tony Four Seasons Hotel, where most of the international artists were also billeted.

Best international film was "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon." Chinese **Zhang Ziyi** accepted the award in behalf of director **Ang Lee**.

One amusing moment was when Ronan volunteered to be the interpreter for the Chinese-speaking Zhang Ziyi when she presented the nominees for Favorite Video.

Ronan was impressive, except that he was reading the translation on a tele-prompter.

The Favorite Video award went to Backstreet Boys for "The Call."

When it was Ronan's turn to perform his hits, "When You Say Nothing at All" and "Rollercoaster," the audience sang with him.

Missed cue

Westlife was named Favorite International Act, besting N'Sync, Backstreet Boys, Destiny's Child and M2M.

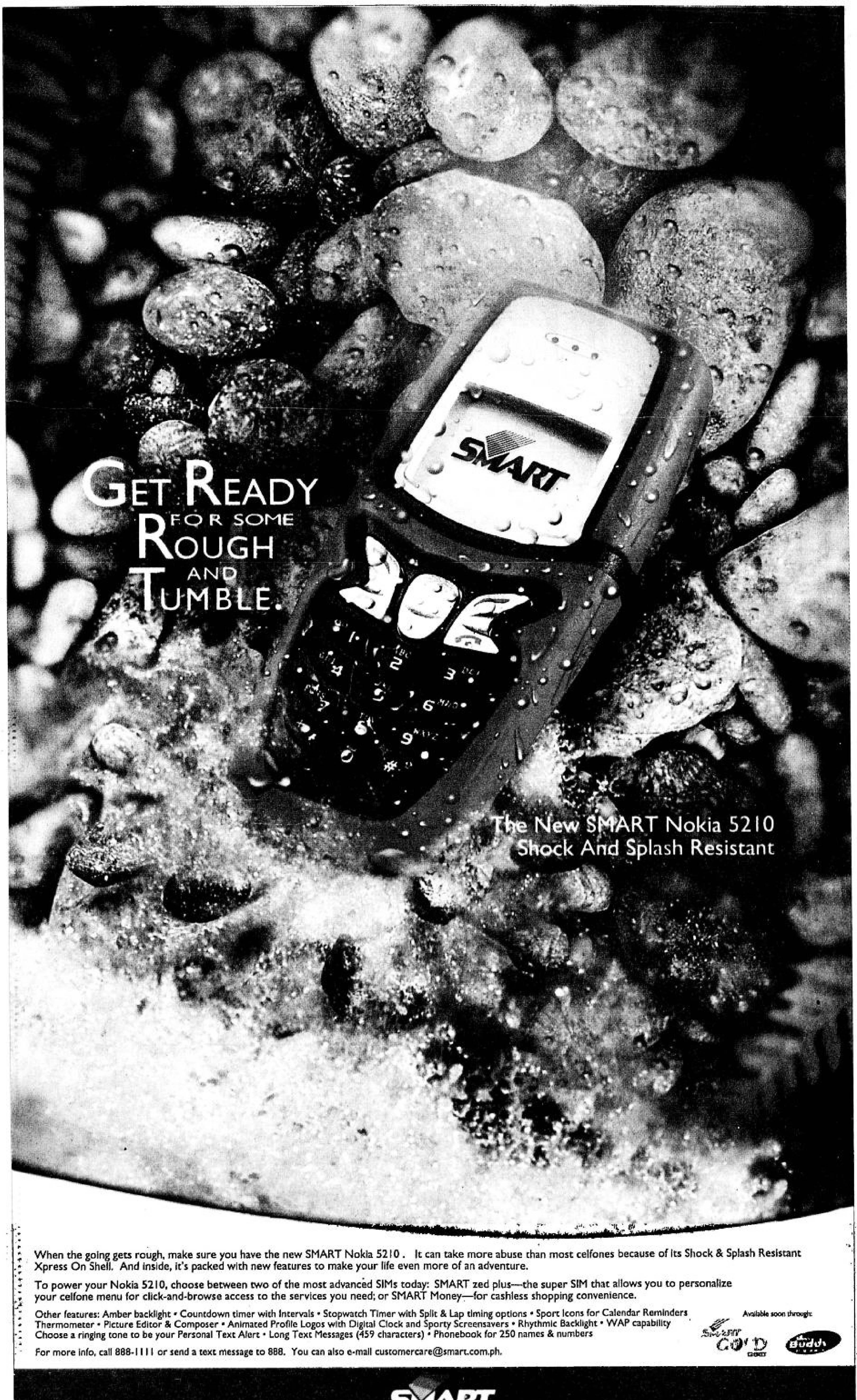
Westlife capped the awards ceremony by dishing out the title track of their latest album, "World of Our Own," from BMG Records.

As Mandy Moore's closing spiel said, "It ain't over till Westlife sings!"

But even in the last number, there had to be a second take when Westlife vocalist **Mark Feehily** missed the music cue.

The trophy had an innovative design. The cubical trophy was made of pewter and opened on top like a box, revealing a multimedia screen inside that played a short tribute tape to honor the winner.

Even the production numbers were not something to write home about. As one of my companions commented, *"Daig na daig pa ng 'ASAP'."* One of the ASAP writers was also there watching that night.



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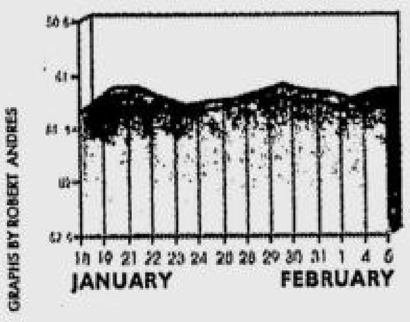
January inflation dips to 21-month low

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

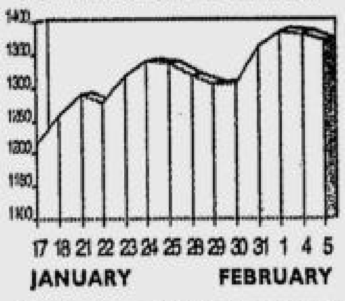
₱51.195 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 5, 2002

¥132.54 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 5, 2002

GOLD: $290.40/290.70
per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 5, 2002

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks end down

STOCKS ended lower yesterday as the market continued to undergo a technical correction following a recent series of strong rallies, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index finished down 10.68 points, or 0.8 percent, at 1,372.74, just above its 1,370-point immediate support. Monday, the index fell 0.2 percent.

Turnover fell to 772.9 million shares worth P344.7 million from 1.147 billion shares worth P522 million on Monday.

Weighing on the index was profit-taking in Filinvest Land, which fell 4 percent at P2.38 on 20.48 million shares traded.

Prior to Monday's decline, the main index finished at its highest closing level in nearly seven months at 1,386.31 points, propelled by strong foreign interest in the market anchored on brighter economic prospects this year. *AP, AFP*

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S annual inflation rate slid to a 21-month low of 3.8 percent in January from a revised rate of 4.1 percent in December as robust agricultural production tempered the uptick in the prices of food and most other basic commodities.

The December inflation rate, which was much lower than the 6.9 percent rate for the same month last year, was also within the 3.7-3.9 percent expectation of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

In a statement yesterday, the National Economic and Development Authority said the low inflation rate for January would increase the likelihood of the average inflation rate for this year falling below the 5-6 percent range targeted by the government.

As such, the Neda said its technical working group would "continue to monitor inflation developments, with the view toward revising the inflation target for the year, should inflationary pressures remain weaker than expected."

The National Statistics Office reported that the annual inflation rate for food, beverage and tobacco decelerated to 1.8 percent in January from 2.3 percent in December.

For food alone, the inflation rate further dropped to 1.6 percent in January from 2.1 percent in December mainly due to the continued decline in the prices of rice and corn, the country's main staple as well as those of fruits and vegetables. In addition, there was a slower increase in the prices of dairy products, eggs, fish, meat and miscellaneous foods.

The indices for clothing, services and miscellaneous items likewise dropped to 2.8 percent, 5.7 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively, from 2.9 percent, 6.1 percent and 3 percent.

On the other hand, the rate of utilities such as fuel, light and water rose to 10.8 percent from 9 percent while the increase in the housing and repairs index remained at the previous month's rate of 6.5 percent.

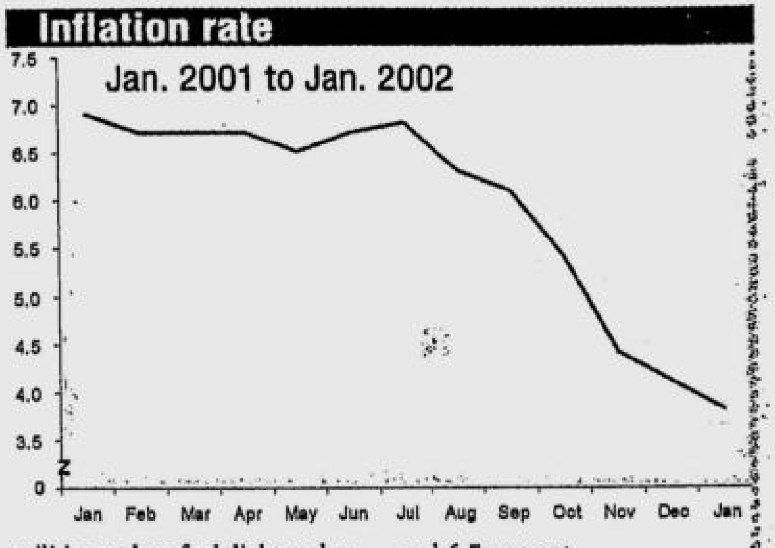
The inflation rate also fell in both the National Capital Region and areas outside Metro Manila to 5.3 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively, from 7.9 percent and 6.5 percent.

DBS Vickers Ballas analyst Jomar Lacson said the January inflation rate was slightly below his expectation of 4 percent for the period. He explained the downtrend was a base effect of the stable prices since the first half of last year.

Lacson said the benign inflation rate meant that the country

JANUARY/ B3

Inflation rate



Encouraging consumer price data leave room for rate cut

THE LOW inflation in January is sufficiently benign for Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura to say there is room for flexibility on interest rates.

"That's good, within expectations," Buenaventura told Reuters. "As I have said before, as long as inflation is under control, that should give us flexibility, but we will have to wait for the Feb. 14 (central bank policy meeting)."

The Bangko Sentral last trimmed overnight interest rates on Jan. 17 with a 25-basis point cut that took rates to a six-year low.

The overnight borrowing rate is currently at 7.50 percent and the lending rate is 9.75 percent, after 17 rate cuts since Dec. 1, 2000.

Last week, Buenaventura said the central bank was open to further easing, despite the US Federal Reserve calling a halt to its year-long campaign of rate cuts.

Much would depend on the January inflation figure, which he estimated at between 3.7 and 4.1

ENCOURAGING/ B3

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Export Bank, Urban merger OKd

By Elena R. Torrijos

REGULATORS last week approved the merger of Urban Bank, Urbancorp Investments Inc. and Export and Industry Bank in line with the rehabilitation of the former bank.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Securities and Exchange Commission Thursday and Friday, respectively, gave their go-ahead for the three-way merger with publicly listed Urban Bank as the surviving institution.

The bank's name, however, will be changed to Export and Industry Bank.

In an interview yesterday, Export and Industry Bank president Benjamin Castillo said the merged institution would be the 22nd largest among 44 commercial banks in the country with P30 billion in assets.

He expressed confidence that the bank would be able to meet the P200-million net income target under the rehabilitation plan for the Urban group.

"We are now more confident we will be able to achieve that first year financial forecast because we certainly know more of Urban Bank and Urbancorp when we drew up the rehabilitation plan last year," Castillo said.

Castillo said the bank would open this month three of 28 former Urban Bank branches located in Cebu, Alabang and Bacolod.

In addition to the three and the Urban bank head office branch opened earlier, the bank would reopen three more branches in March.

The bank's program was to reopen eight branches this year and hold back the opening of 20 remaining Urban Bank branches until the economic environment justified such a move.

The rehabilitation of the Urban group has allowed depositors and creditors of Urban Bank and Urbancorp to withdraw up to P500,000 on the first day of the functional merger with Export and Industry Bank late last year. Depositors and creditors can get 30 percent of their exposure by the end of the first year, another 30 percent on the second year while the remaining 40 percent may be withdrawn at the end of the third year of the plan.

Urban Bank, which was closed by the BSP on April 26, 2000, is the first closed bank to be reopened under the receivership of the state-owned Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

NTC ordered to use powers over phone firms

By Abigail L. Ho

THE HOUSE Committee on Transportation and Communications has ordered the National Telecommunications Commission to compel cellular service providers to give back the free text messages that they took away from subscribers in October last year and January this year.

NTC chief Eliseo Rio Jr. said that on Jan. 23, there was a committee resolution "which strongly ordered that the NTC use its residual powers to compel the cellular phone companies to give back the free text they took away from their subscribers."

He said the regulatory body would provide Congress with a written response on what steps it had taken to that effect when another hearing is held.

For the yet to be scheduled hearing, Rio said Committee chair Rep. Jacinto Paras also invited the presidents of cellular giants Smart Communications Inc., Globe Telecom Inc. and their subsidiaries Pilipino Telephone Corp. and Isla Communications Inc. to present their sentiments on the matter.

"If they don't come, they will be summoned," he said.

Rio did not disclose what they would present during the House Committee hearing, but he did say that the NTC had been weighing when would be a good time to actually come in and intervene using its residual powers.

"The NTC has to discern when to come in and when not to come in. Our decision not to come in contributed to the good performance of the (gross domestic product)," he said.

Rio was referring to the telecommunications-driven phenomenal performance of the country's GDP for 2001. The country's GDP grew by 3.4 percent despite plunging exports and manufacturing outputs.

This was boosted by the rapid expansion in the telecommunications sector, which helped the services sector put in a 42-percent contribution.

Rio explained that had the NTC stepped in earlier to compel the cellular phone firms to give back the number of text messages they took away from subscribers, the telecom sector could not have made as high a contribution as it did to the economy.

The text reductions generated some added revenues for the cellular service providers which, in turn, translated to GDP contribution.

However, Rio said the consumers also contributed to the companies' higher revenues as text messaging generally stayed at a healthy level despite the reduction in free messages.

"If the consumers decided that what the cellular phone firms did was unreasonable, then the GDP would not have performed as well either," he said.

Market forces, not only the NTC, could compel the cellular service providers to give back what they took away, Rio said.

Thrift banks' bad loans up

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BAD loan ratio of the country's more than 100 thrift banks went up slightly to 12.48 percent as of October from the previous month's 12.28 percent as the increase in soured credits outweighed the improvement in the loan portfolio.

Data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that a 2-percent increase in bad loans to P17.352 billion in October from 17.016 billion had outpaced a 0.37-percent improvement in the thrift banks' loan portfolio to P139.05 billion from P138.54 billion.

On a year-ago basis, the loan quality of the thrifts banks also deteriorated from 11.45 percent of total loans equivalent to P15.212 billion in soured credits.

Taking the interbank loans out of the equation, the bad loans ratio also increased to 12.78 percent from the September level of 12.64 percent and the year-ago level of 11.91 percent.

During the same period, the bad loan ratio of the commercial banking system peaked at 18.81 percent as soured credits reached P291 billion while total loans also decreased.

A non-performing loan refers to an account whose principal or interest was unpaid for 90 days or more after the due date. A loan is considered past due if it is unpaid after a month.

The central bank noted that thrift banks had set aside a higher loan-loss provision in October to support the increase in bad loans.

Loan loses provisioning went up by 2.92 percent or by P240 million to P8.5 billion, propping up the industry's coverage ratio to 49 percent in October from 48.6 percent a month ago.

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Post-Sept. 11 fallout

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

IF YOU own a building or live in a condominium, brace yourself with the prospect of paying more-than-double your previous property's insurance premiums.

The giant insurance companies that lost billions in the Sept. 11 attacks on New York are bent on recovering their losses and raising their premiums worldwide, including on buildings halfway round the world.

In Makati, the homeowners' association of the landmark BSA Tower, the 38-story condominium in Legaspi Village with the triangular steel tower on top, got shocked last month after the building's current insurer informed them that it was increasing annual premium payments from about P383,000 to more than P1 million.

Thinking that the insurer was trying to pull a fast one on them, BSA Tower solicited bids from other insurance companies, only to get similar quotes. One even offered a much higher P1.95-million quote, excluding P480,675 in taxes.

One realtor who lives in one of the Ayala Avenue condos confirmed the upward spike, saying the reinsurance market has "hardened substantially" because of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

In addition to higher insurance costs, Makati building owners are also being hit this year with a 25-30 percent increase in real estate taxes, ironically at a time of office and residential glut and continued depressed real estate prices.

Besides the higher real estate taxes, the Makati city government is currently undertaking a house-to-house survey to flush out houses, apartments, condos, and townhouses being rented out but whose rental earnings are not being declared to either the City Hall or the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Not very Happee

THE OWNER of Happee Toothpaste, Cecilio Pedro, is not flashing his usual toothy smile these days.

Pedro's bodyguard/driver, more correctly, the bodyguard/driver assigned to Pedro's son, is the prime suspect in the shooting of a De La Salle guard last month, after the blue guard tried to shoo away an illegally parked Nissan Terrano along the clogged Taft Avenue, in front of the DLSU campus.

The De La Salle community has spoken strongly in favor of their fallen guard, and now awaits what kind of restitution the toothpaste magnate would offer the victim's family and, more important, how he would treat his overzealous bodyguard who, incidentally, happens to be an active policeman.

Short takes

- SOMEONE is definitely not amused with tomorrow's opening of Shopwise in Libis. For the second time, pre-opening banners placed by the supermarket along C-5 had been vandalized, the last incident occurring sometime this weekend.

Strangely, only the banners on the lampposts fronting the ailing Uniwide supermarket had been ripped out, just as what had happened late last month.

- BANK of Commerce is set to sign a memorandum of agreement taking over First e-Bank after the return of Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura from an overseas mission next week.

Heard through the grapevine

BAGUIO Country Club members may not know it, but the club has acquired, using club funds, a Citation II corporate jet. Guess who brokered the sale and who is using the jet for their private trips?

Clue? Ask the board of advisers of the club, whose two officers also happen to be both leading members of Copa, the GMA-critical Council on Philippine Affairs.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi @hotmail.com.)

GMA urged to stop port rate increases

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE COUNTRY'S major business groups led by the Coalition for Shipping and Ports Modernization have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop the Philippine Ports Authority's (PPA) "capricious" increases in cargo handling rates that have nudged up shipping costs by up to 80 percent since 1998.

In a letter to President Macapagal, the business groups asked for a rollback of the 10- to 15-percent increase in arrastre and stevedoring services made in February last year; a revocation of the 10-percent increase approved on Jan. 12 this year, and a suspension of ongoing public hearings for another 25-percent hike in cargo rates.

Handling costs have gone up by 80 percent for foreign cargoes and 52 percent for domestic cargoes from 1998 to 2002. The business groups said these were approved "unconscionably and capriciously" by the PPA without regard to the situation of port users and sometimes without even waiting for cargo handlers to petition for an increase.

That these series of rate increases were approved without public hearing and under dubious procedures highlights the PPA's conflict of interest in being both a regulator and revenue earner.

"This is the equivalent of granting the Energy Regulatory Commission a percentage of every increase it grants in fuel prices," the business groups said.

The PPA, which gets a 10-percent cut from cargo handling fees, saw its revenues rise by 48 percent even though total cargo volume shrank last year.

The business groups said the PPA's trigger-happy disposition on rate increases "has become ruinous to port users, costly to consumers, and harmful to the economy."

Encouraging . . .

From page B1

percent, the governor said then.

Since the figure has emerged at the lower end of his forecast, analysts said there was a high possibility of a cut.

"The outturn is a positive one which should be supportive of another 25-basis point rate cut when the (central bank) meets in mid-February to consider policy," said Gene Frieda, an analyst at 4CAST.

"A cut is subject, as always, to the prevailing need to ensure peso stability, which on current grounds looks well intact."

The peso opened local trading at 51.15 to the dollar yesterday, up from Monday's 51.22 on further optimism over an upgraded outlook for the Philippines from ratings agency Moody's Investors Service.

The main stock market index closed 0.77 percent down, but traders said investors were cashing in profits after a strong run-up last week and earlier in the year. While the inflation data was viewed as positive, it only provided a cushion for the fall, they said.

Graham Parry, an economist at Lehman Brothers in Tokyo, said the January inflation figure was slightly higher than he had forecast but the central bank should cut rates anyway.

"It's a little higher than we were expecting, but it is still a continuation of the positive trend we've seen in recent months," he said.

"If we had seen a larger fall in inflation, I'd think it would be quite likely that they would cut this week. Now we think it may not be this week but we still see further rate cuts at some point in the next few weeks."

The NSO revised the December annual inflation figure to 4.1 percent from the previously announced 3.9 percent, adding the impact of higher water utility rates in the capital Manila.

Economists said the revision was unusual but did not alter the broad trend of falling inflation from a high of 6.9 percent in the year to January 2001.

January

From page B1

could afford a further slowdown in interest rates.

"In the United States, the real interest rate has hit negative levels but here, it's still positive, so there's room for the BSP to cut its overnight rates. The key component here is the government's thrust to lower banks' prime lending rates so as to spur business activities," Lacson said.

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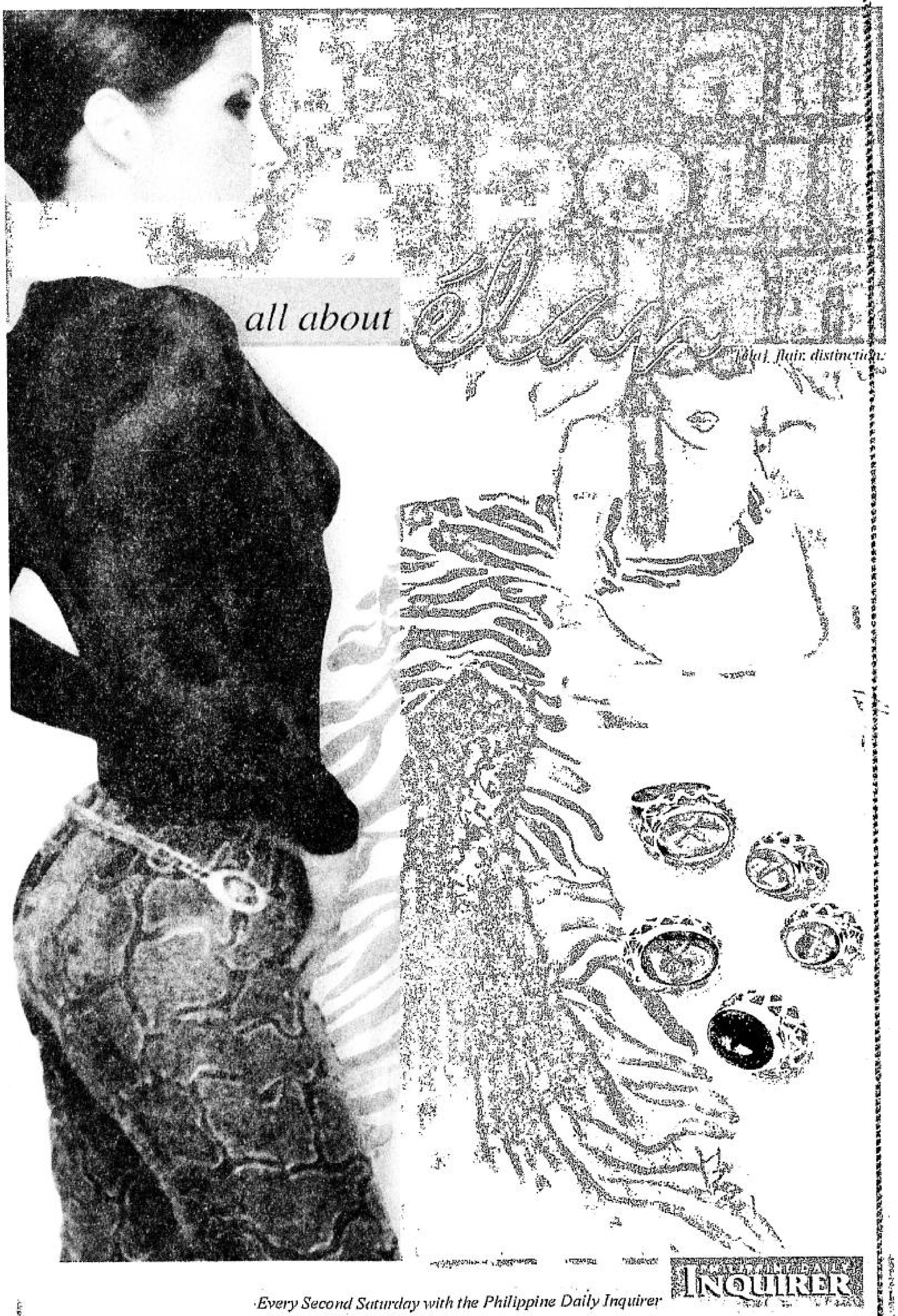

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RFM confirms talks to spin off flour business, take in Zuellig

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOOD and beverage conglomerate RFM Corp. confirmed yesterday plans to take in Swiss firm Zuellig Group NA Inc. as a strategic partner in its flour business.

In a disclosure, RFM vice president and executive assistant to the president Ramon Lopez informed the Philippine Stock Exchange that RFM was in talks with Zuellig over a joint venture involving its flour business.

"RFM has been in discussion with said group for a couple of months to explore joint-venture possibilities in the flour milling business, not including the branded business," Lopez disclosed.

RFM has been open to taking in strategic partners to strengthen its remaining businesses following the divestment of its controlling stake in its profitable soft-drink unit, Cosmos Bottling Corp., he said.

"The talks, however, are ongoing and have not resulted in any agreement with respect to deal structure and enterprise valuation," he clarified.

It was earlier reported that negotiations between RFM and Zuellig were now on the valuation stage and moving toward a 50-50 percent joint venture.

The revenue size of RFM's flour business is currently estimated at about P1.8 billion, representing a 14-percent share of the local flour milling market. The business is currently operated only as a division.

Under the proposed joint venture, according to persons familiar with the matter, RFM's flour business will be spun off and a stake will be sold to a joint-venture partner.

The widely diversified Zuellig Group established a foothold in the Philippines in 1939 through Zuellig Pharma, which focused exclusively on the pharmaceutical and healthcare markets. It now operates two local distribution companies, Zuellig Pharma Corp. and Metro Drug Inc. Over time, Zuellig Pharma branched out from its base in the Philippines to other countries in the region.

Sources said while Zuellig was active in the distribution business in the Philippines, it was keen on forging a partnership with existing players in the flour milling business, where the Swiss conglomerate likewise has some interests across the globe.

The Zuellig Group evolved from a traditional trading house into a diversified global organization with interests in trading, manufacturing and services with operations in about 15 countries across the Asia-Pacific. Today, its businesses include information technology services, insurance, pharmaceutical, marketing, manufacturing and distribution, feed and flourmills, luxury goods marketing and hygiene services.

Smart sees Valentine's logjam, lifts capacity

By Abigail L. Ho

SMART Communications Inc. said yesterday it would boost its network's capacity by 20 million "text messages" a day starting Feb. 12 in anticipation of a surge in communication among Valentine's day well-wishers.

"Smart can already handle 250 million (Smart-to-Smart) messages a day, but we're putting up 30 additional E1s (digital transmission links). This will boost our message-handling capacity by 20 million messages," Smart legal and carrier relations department head Rogelio Quevedo said in a news conference.

Quevedo said Smart was augmenting its capacity in time for Valentine's day. The company handles the most number of text messages on this day, exceeding even those sent during Christmas and New Year, he said.

Quevedo clarified that the higher capacity would ease only Smart-to-Smart cell phone traffic. Subscribers of other wireless service providers could still experience failed attempts to send messages or might not get their messages on time, he said.

Quevedo explained that traffic between Smart and rival carrier Globe Telecom Inc. could only accommodate 80 million messages a day. "We really need to increase the number of interconnection links between Globe and Smart. We need more interconnection links to be able to send messages to the other operator," he said.

He said Globe would have to boost its message-handling capacity to ease traffic between Smart's and Globe's networks. The same goes for other wireless service providers, including Globe subsidiary Isla Communications Inc., he said.

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Ayala offers to buy shares of 3 affiliate holding firms

AYALA Corp. said it had offered to purchase the shares of the minority shareholders of PFC Properties Inc., PF Prime Properties Inc. and PFN Holdings Corp.

The three are holding companies incorporated and established to own and hold the assets excluded from the sale of Ayala's shareholdings in Pure Foods Corp. to San Miguel Corp. in May 2001.

On May 4, PFC declared the PFC Properties, PF Prime and PFN Holdings shares as property dividends to its stockholders of record as of May 21, 2001.

Thus, PFC stockholders of record as of May 21 last year now own shares in PFC Properties Inc., PF Prime Properties Inc. and PFN Holdings Corp.

Ayala's offer price to minority investors values the three companies at P1.18 billion. The total tender offer for the shares in the holding companies was estimated to amount to P71 million or about P21 per original PFC share held.

The offer price will be for all shares held in PFC Properties Inc., PF Prime Properties Inc. and PFN Holdings Corp. Thus, Ayala will not accept a partial sale of shares. The offer period will be from Jan. 7, 2002 to Feb. 7, 2002.

Investors who want to sell their shares to Ayala have only up to this week to signify their interest.

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* Prices may vary in provincial areas

Transco capex set at ₱17.3B

THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. has earmarked some P17.3 billion to cover its capital expenditures this year.

Transco data showed that this year's capital expenditures were 9.5 percent more than the year-ago level of P15.8 billion.

Transco president Asisclo Gonzaga said the allocation would be used to rehabilitate the company's transmission substations and lines.

"About P16 billion of this represents our cash outlay for such projects," Gonzaga said. ***Ronnel W. Domingo***

DISCLOSURES

GLOBE Telecom Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 11, 9 a.m., at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Intercontinental Manila. Stockholders as of Feb. 28 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ATLAS Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. has announced the retirement of Fernando Verde as president, chief operating officer and director of the company.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. has disclosed that 303,361 of its shares have been exercised and fully paid for under the company's stock option plan. This brought the total number of treasury shares under the plan to 21,147,842 shares. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, February 5, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	1,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	99	100	99	100	400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	67	67	67	67	279,900
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14	14	5,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	28	28	28	28	121,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	208	208	205	206	35,250
Philippine National Bank	75.5	77	75.5	77	31,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.25	13.25	13	13.25	35,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	17	18	17	18	474,900
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Abacus Financial	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1280	1280	1280	1280	530
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1010	1015	1010	1010	14,750
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	35.5	35.5	35	35	25,700
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.55	0.55	5,910,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	770	775	770	775	12,560
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.038	0.039	0.038	0.038	4,000,000
Piltel	0.45	0.46	0.44	0.45	6,260,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	200,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	525	525	520	520	68,570
Ivantage Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	90,000
Philweb Com Inc.	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	98,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	27	27	27	27	28,400
Manila Electric Co. B	38.5	38.5	38	38.5	900,300
Petron Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.84	1.86	3,899,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.95	3	2.9	2.9	3,210,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	200,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	1,150,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	1,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	100,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	14	14.25	14	14.25	555,200
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	23.25	23.5	23	23.25	241,100
RFM Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.85	2.85	6,801,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	70,000
San Miguel Corp. A	45.5	45.5	45.5	45.5	36,100
San Miguel Corp. B	62	62	61.5	61.5	74 900
Universal Robina Corp.	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.5	75,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	1,920,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.72	1.74	1.7	1.74	1,596,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12	800
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	230,000
A. Soriano Corp	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	220,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.5	16,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	60,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.77	0.81	0.77	0.8	16,660,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	250,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.4	0.43	0.4	0.43	260,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	2,340,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	2,700,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	690,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	30.5	30.5	30	30.5	200,200
Global Equities Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	2,630,000
Ionics Inc.	9	9	8.6	8.6	318,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.4	200,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.84	0.85	1,330,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	50,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	14,170,000
Music Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	2,930,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	2,300,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	1,040,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	2,770,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coal Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	10,000
Federal Chemicals Inc.	6.6	6.6	6	6	11,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	25,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	980,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	600,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	720,000
Manila Jockey Club	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.51	0.55	1,060,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	35.5	35.5	35	35	200,900
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.76	1.76	1.74	1.74	221,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	760	760	760	760	500
Jollibee Warrants	13.75	14	13.75	14	3,500
Omico Corporation Warrant	0.0016	0.0016	0.0014	0.0014	57,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.006	0.0065	0.0055	0.0065	112,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	1,465,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	2,640,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	5,380,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.31	2,880,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.44	2.5	2.38	2.38	20,482,000
Gotesco Land Inc	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	1,600,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.27	430,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.07	0.07	0.0675	0.0675	200,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.6	37,000
SM Development Corp.	0.94	0.96	0.94	0.94	150,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.8	1,882,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.085	0.085	0.08	0.08	1,800,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	20,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	20,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.039	0.041	0.039	0.039	30,400,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.039	0.04	0.039	0.04	1,500,000
Lepanto Cons Mng Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,120,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	2,050,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	9,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	2,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0044	0.0044	0.0042	0.0042	70,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	2,200,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	650,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	900,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	15,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,020,130	56,341,215.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	580,563,530	208,896,285.00
PRO	39,066,000	76,362,970.00
Mining	119,840,000	2,763,250.00
OIL	30,100,000	191,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	770,589,660	344,554,720.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	558.12	UNCH 0.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,875.12	DOWN 12.66
PRO	603.26	DOWN 10.59
Mining	1,332.24	DOWN 2.33
OIL	1.99	DOWN 0.05
All Shares Index	729.02	DOWN 3.32
Composite	1,372.74	DOWN 10.68

NO. OF ADVANCES: 21; NO. OF DECLINES: 61, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 30; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 112; NO. OF TRADES: 3,017

CURRENCIES

Feb. 5, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.148106	1.000000	51.2850
Japan	Yen	0.008675	0.007556	0.3875
United Kingdom	Pound	1.634673	1.423800	73.0196
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.147202	0.128213	6.5754
Switzerland	Franc	0.676869	0.589553	30.2352
Canada	Dollar	0.718914	0.626174	32.1133
Singapore	Dollar	0.626832	0.545971	28.0001
Australia	Dollar	0.585290	0.509788	26.1445
Bahrain	Dinar	3.045535	2.652661	136.0417
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.306162	0.266667	13.6760
Brunei	Dollar	0.624990	0.544366	27.9178
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000111	0.000097	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.026106	0.022738	1.1661
UAE	Dirham	0.312588	0.272264	13.9631
Korea	Won	0.000878	0.000765	0.0392
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.871000	44.6692
Brazil	Real	0.481143	0.414938	21.2801
Denmark	Kroner	0.473837	0.412712	21.1659
India	Rupee	0.134644	0.117275	6.0144
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.023653	0.020602	1.0566
Mexico	New Peso	0.302173	0.263193	13.4979
New Zealand	Dollar	0.125387	0.109212	5.6009
Norway	Kroner	0.477621	0.416008	21.3350
Pakistan	Rupee	0.127274	0.016681	0.8555
South Africa	Rand	0.019152	0.0811	4.1592
Sweden	Kroner	0.108124	0.094176	4.8298
Syria	Pound	0.022380	0.019493	0.9997
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032897	0.028653	1.4695
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001498	0.001305	0.0669

Australia told to live up to free trade beliefs

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A PRESIDENTIAL adviser and head of one of Asia's largest fruit exporters has challenged Canberra to live up to its principles as a champion of free trade by finally lifting its ban on Philippine fresh fruit exports to Australia.

"Australia must break the ice and demonstrate openness in considering Philippine interests, especially since Australia leads the Cairns group of the WTO (World Trade Organization), which advocates open trading in Asia and the Pacific," presidential adviser on agriculture and job creation Luis Lorenzo Jr. said in an interview.

Lorenzo, chair of Del Monte Philippines Inc., one of the Philippines' biggest banana exporters, said only this gesture would give meaning to the visit of Australian Agriculture Minister Warren Truss.

Truss is the first high-level representative of Australia to visit the Philippines in the last two years, which have been marked by choppy trade relations between the two countries.

"The success of Struss' visit will be measured on the basis of the resulting market access arrangements for the agricultural produce of our two countries," Lorenzo said.

The Macapagal administration is hoping to get Canberra to live up to its standing commitment to Manila to release by June this year an import risk analysis of Philippine fruits that will open access to Australian markets.

The Philippines is seeking to end Australia's 20-year ban on Philippine fruits that include pineapple, mango, coconut peat and banana. Canberra bans all mango imports from the Philippines except those produced in Guimaras. Australia imported Philippine mangoes until 1998, when it outlawed a chemical treatment by Philippine growers.

Manila and Canberra have set high-level talks in April to look at widening market access for their agricultural products in each other's markets.

Truss ended his visit yesterday after meeting with senior Philippine officials, including Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor and Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II.

"While I am determined to maintain the strict quarantine regime that prevents exotic pests and diseases from entering Australia, I have arranged for senior Australian biosecurity officials to visit the Philippines within the next two weeks to clearly explain Australia's quarantine procedures," Truss said in a news briefing.

Truss has raised Australia's desire to export temperate fruits and vegetables to the Philippines. He also sought a lifting of the Philippines' ban on meat and bone meal imports and expressed concern over "difficulties regarding the microbiological testing of raw meat." The Philippines set the restrictions on imports of meat and meat products following the most recent mad cow and foot-and-mouth disease scares. ***With reports from Christine A. Gaylican and AFP***

More infra funds set for LGUs

By Pippa M. Rendel

THE GOVERNMENT has vowed to provide more funds for infrastructure projects in low-income local government units in an attempt to speed up development in poor communities.

In a statement yesterday, the National Economic and Development Authority said the funding would come from its Project Development and Monitoring Fund, which would provide numerous development projects across 70 low-income municipalities and six provinces.

The statement said P15.5 million from the PDMF had so far been released to finance 35 prefeasibility and feasibility studies, eight master and poverty alleviation plans and two capacity-building programs for low-income LGUs.

The PDMF provides funds to low-income LGUs for project studies, development, monitoring and evaluations, such as master planning and capacity building programs, poverty alleviation programs and education and transport development plans and is being administered by the Neda.

PDMF overseer and Neda Deputy Director General Augusto Santos said he was hopeful the fund would provide the much-needed assistance to poorer communities.

"There has been a clamor on the ground for assistance in developing and implementing projects, especially among low-income municipalities. We hope PDMF can respond to this call," he said.

Technical and financial studies provided under this funding release will assess the viability of proposed projects, such as the following:

- integrated livelihood development projects for farmers, fisherfolk and other communities in select municipalities;
- inter-local networking among three municipalities in Quezon province;
- a region-wide education and transport development plan in Cordillera Administrative Region; and,
- integrated upland agriculture management in Albay.

AJO.net forecast windfall

TECHNOLOGY firm AJO.Net Holdings Inc. is expecting some windfall from its investments in the United States.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, AJO.net spokesperson Lorraine Puyat reported that technology solutions provider Bitmicro Networks Inc. had exceeded its revenue targets last year, owing to strong demand for military applications in the fourth quarter following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

She also reported that Mforma Corp., a content and service platform provider for wireless applications, increased its subscriber base following an integration with other carriers.

From 2000 to 2001, Bitmicro increased total revenue by 138 percent from $1.7 million to $4.4 million. In the fourth quarter of 2001 alone, the company achieved $1.54 million in sales, exceeding projections and more than doubling sales for the third quarter. ***Pippa M. Rendel***

Poultry ban stays, says DA

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture reiterated yesterday its ban on poultry imports from Hong Kong, China, Japan and the US state of Pennsylvania due to an outbreak of avian virus.

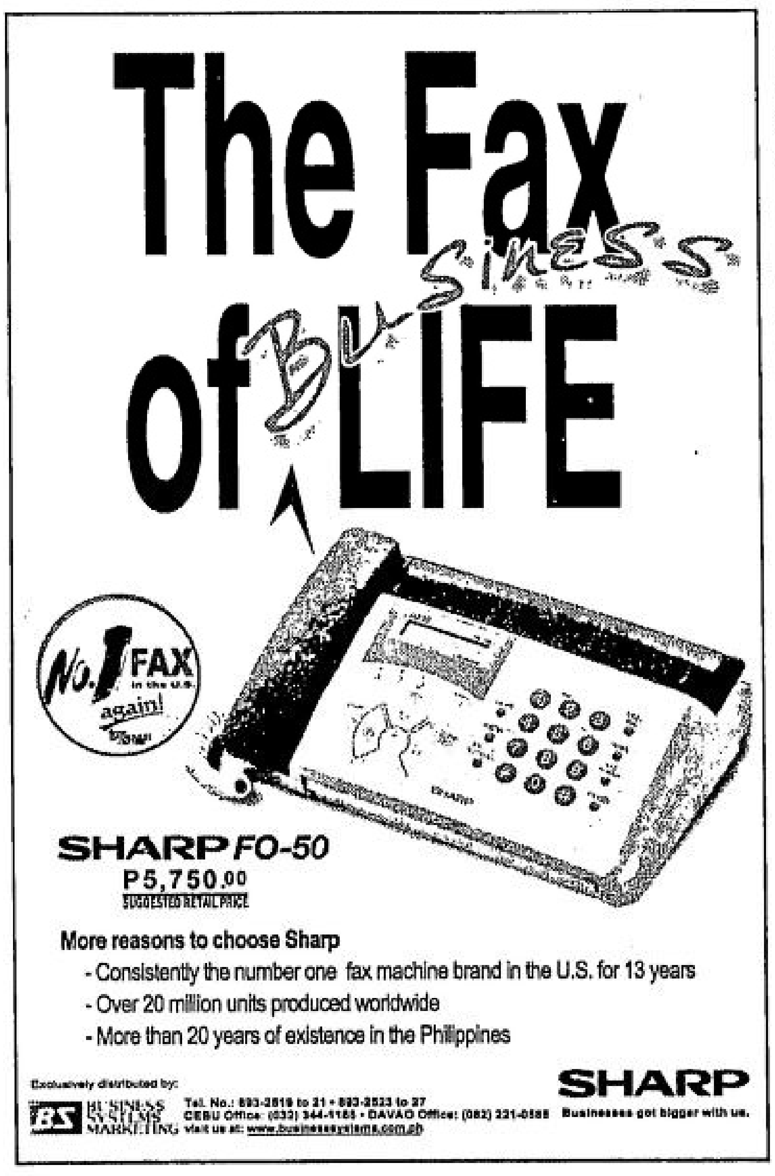
The ban came following reports that some 100,000 chickens in Hong Kong were being slaughtered to contain an outbreak of a bird flu strain that killed six people in 1997.

The Philippines temporarily banned last week imports of poultry products from Pennsylvania.

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said in an administrative order that he imposed the restriction after the United States confirmed the outbreak of the so-called avian flu virus in the state last month.

The ban covers imports of poultry meat slaughtered from December last year, as well as chicks, semen and eggs.

Last year, the Philippines imported some 7,000 tons of US poultry products. ***Christine A. Gaylican***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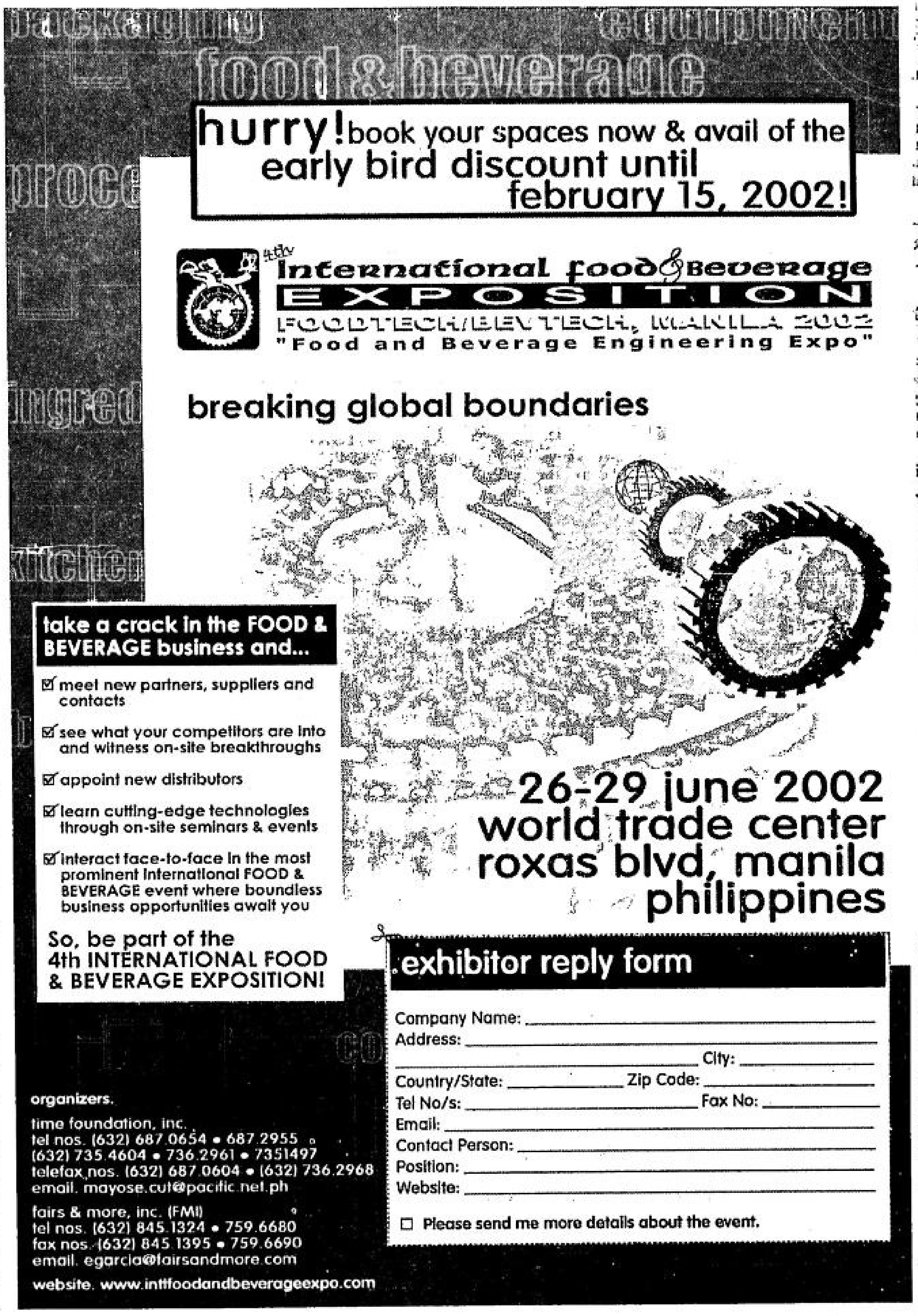
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MUNICIPALITY OF TANAY
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INVITATION TO BID

Interested Contractors are invited to bid on the Proposed Construction of Rural Health Unit of this Municipality of Tanay, Province of Rizal, Prequalification Statements shall be submitted to the Secretariat, PBAC, MPDC Office, Tanay Municipal Building, Tanay, Rizal.

Deadline of submission will be on **February 12, 2002.**

(Sgd.) **TOMAS A. TANJUATCO**
Municipal Mayor
Municipality of Tanay, Rizal

(PDI – Feb. 6, 2002)

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is herbey given that the estate of the late spouses MERCURIO TRIA and SABINA R. TRIA has been extrajudicially settled among theirs heirs as per Doc. No. 669; Page No. 36; Book No. 57; Series of 2001 under the Notary Public Atty. Cipriano P. Maribojoc of Quezon City. (PDI-Feb. 6, 13 & 20, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the MESALA account of the late Francisco P. Jaudian Jr. has been extrajudicially partitioned, among his heirs per Doc. No. 451, Page No.92, Book No. 19, Series of 2001 before Notary Public Atty Warlito C. Buenavista of Manila PDI-Jan. 23, 30 & Feb 6, 2002

NOTICE OF LOSS

Globe Telecom Inc. Warrants Certificate No. 000144 for 4,936 shares registered in the name of Mercury Group of Companies, Inc. and Stock Certificate No. 000132 for 5,142 shares registered in the name of M.E. Holding Corporation.
(PDI-Jan.23,30&Feb.6,2002)

Notice is given that the S2 Card License No. 79896 under the name of Dr. Ferdinand P. Fermo was lost. *(PDI-Feb. 6, 13, '02)*

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4 3D Analyst for ArcView 3.2
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2 Arcinfo ArcGIS 8.1

Bidders may submit their sealed bids on or before **March 3, 2002.** For further details, you may contact:

The Co-Directors
Balay Ang Banua, F. Rafols Road, Sta. Monica Heights
Puerto Princesa City 5300 Palawan
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Repubiika ng Pilipinas
Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka
PAMBANSANG PANGASIWAAN NG PAGSASAKA AT PANGINGISDA
(National Agricultural and Fishery Council)
Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon
Tel. No. 928-6741 to 65 local 510

February 5, 2002

Tender No. 5thJNPTG-UREA - 01
MOP - 01
SBM - 01

INVITATION TO BID

The National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC) hereby invites sealed bids for the sale of the following commodities under the 5th Japanese Non-Project Type Grant (JNPTG):

COMMODITY	VOLUME (MT) (+0% / -5%)	SHIPMENT ARRIVAL
UREA FERTILIZER	5,000-10,000	April 2002
MOP FERTILIZER	14,220	May 2002
SOYBEAN MEAL	18,025	June 2002

Tender documents can be secured from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Apacible Hall, Department of Agriculture, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City starting on February 6, 2002.

The pre-bid conference shall be held at the NAFC Maynila Conference Room on February 8, 2002 at 7:00 a.m. for fertilizer and 9:00 a.m. for soybean meal.

Fully completed sealed bids should be submitted on **February 9, 2002** not later than 8:00 a.m. for fertilizer and 9:00 a.m. for soybean meal. Bids received after the scheduled time will not be accepted/entertained and will be returned unopened.

For details, please contact Joseph delos Santos or Peachy Agustin at Tel. Nos. 929-8234 or 928-1966.

By Authority of the NAFC Chairman-Coordinator.

(Sgd.) RICARDO A. VILLO, JR.
Executive Director

(PDI – Feb. 6 & 7, 2002)

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Unitrust fiasco exposes BSP's weakness

By Clarissa S. Batino

FEATURES

SOMETIMES, it is not enough to know that something wrong is going to happen. One also needs to have the necessary tools that can prevent it from happening.

Take the case of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and its most recent headache called Unitrust Development Bank.

The BSP knew what was coming—the fall of Unitrust. Unfortunately, it didn't have enough power to avert its fall no matter how glaring the signs were. And it happened, Unitrust declared a bank holiday last Jan. 4.

Unitrust used to be a little known savings bank until it started placing two-page ads in a major daily in early October last year. The ads seemed harmless. They merely announced a good number of vacant positions in the bank and offered huge salaries plus incentives.

Naturally, the ads attracted attention and created a flurry of excitement. Even some central bank employees were enticed to join the queue of people seeking a place in what turned out to be Unitrust's wobbly organization.

Traces of Ogami

However, a closer look at the ads would have already given a discerning reader an idea that something was not quite right. People familiar with Genta Ogami of G. Cosmos Phils. and his world salvation advocacy would have traced these ads and their themes to the self-styled Japanese cult leader who was reportedly one of the new owners of the ill-fated bank.

On Oct. 2 last year, Unitrust sent the BSP a letter informing it that the bank was sold to two Japanese companies and three Filipinos, each owning a 20-percent stake in the bank. The sale, it was informed, was finalized on Sept. 21 also last year.

Unitrust, prior to a sale, was owned by a group consisting of former Philippine Stock Exchange president Jose Luis Yulo, former representative Emigdio Tanjuatco and Psalm president Edgardo del Fonso.

The sale didn't pass through the BSP's scrutiny. Existing rules require prior approval of the central bank on the sale of more than 20-percent equity of a bank. The new owners thought that because each buyer bought only 20 percent, the rule would not apply.

The Monetary Board's approval is also needed before new bank directors and officers can go on board. The new officers need to pass the so-called fit-and-proper rule, a provision in the General Banking Act of 2000.

No background

However, the BSP said that while the names of Unitrust's new owners, directors and officers were submitted, there were no supporting papers to back them. These papers should have indicated the new owners' capability to own and run a bank and the suitability of the officers and directors for the positions they were taking. The two Japanese companies—G. Universal Co. Ltd. and Minamoto Kaishu Saiken Co. Ltd.—did not even provide any background on their operations or their owners.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the BSP had repeatedly asked the new owners of Unitrust to submit information about their companies and their respective shareholders to determine whether they were qualified to run the bank. But no information came.

Buenaventura said that the composition of the Unitrust board of directors at that time had kept on changing for various reasons and that made the monetary authorities even more suspicious. This prompted the BSP to withhold the approval of the appointment of the new officers. And as the central bank held back its decision on this, tension among the new bank owners had started to brew.

Local shareholders led by Francis Yuseco, who reportedly brokered the sale of the bank between the group of Yulo and the Japanese investors, decided to "take over" the operations of the bank. He, likewise, refused to follow the orders of Ogami. One such order, according to Yuseco, was to ransack the bank's vaults and extend Dosri loans.

The central bank was criticized in the press for not having rescinded the sale of Unitrust when it became apparent that the new owners could not get their acts together.

No authority

Critics believed that the BSP should have padlocked the bank as soon as it came to learn about the infighting and the Dosri loans being extended. This despite the presence of a resident overseer assigned by the BSP to monitor the transition in Unitrust.

The management squabble led to the resignation of more than 70 percent of its staff and the infighting made it easier for the warring groups to gain access to the bank's vaults. Thus, the bank was forced to declare a bank holiday on Jan.4.

"We do not have the legal authority to nullify a consummated transfer of ownership. This is actually one of the amendments to the central bank act that we have been suggesting," said the central bank governor.

Also, Buenaventura said the BSP had been asking for authority that would enable it to replace and disqualify incapable or erring officers and directors of any bank and to close a bank to protect the interest of the public.

Buenaventura stressed, though, that the central bank had done to Unitrust what its powers allowed it to do. The BSP, for one, suspended Unitrust's thrift bank license, its authority to accept foreign currency deposits and to grant new loans. It also ordered Unitrust to stop placing its advertisements in newspapers.

In the light of the Unitrust fiasco, the Monetary Board had asked Congress anew to amend the Central Bank Act and to give the BSP more regulatory teeth.

Banking Act amendment

Buenaventura said the Monetary Board had asked Congress to include in the law's amendments a provision that would require its prior approval in the sale of a bank or financial institution before the deal is consummated.

"Under this proposal, existing directors will continue to be responsible until the new set of officers and directors pass the fit-and-proper test," he added.

He said these policies had to be legislated since they could not be implemented merely through the strength of a new circular because they might contradict some provisions of the Corporate Law.

Even before Unitrust's failure, the International Monetary Fund had recommended granting not only the central bank but also the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. stronger regulatory powers to prevent serious problems in the banking sector.

Specifically, the Fund wanted the BSP to be allowed to supersede shareholders' decisions on issues of systemic importance such as a takeover of a bank's management or operations and the sale of a bank if these options would be needed to rescue a bank.

"These options should be open to the BSP and the PDIC on top of the liquidity assistance it could give to troubled banks," said the IMF.

Weak position

The IMF believed that the central bank's position was weak particularly in dealing with big banks in distress that could pose systemic risks. Unitrust was not much of a concern since it accounted for only half a percent of the thrift banking industry.

"At present, we can only provide assistance. But we cannot tell shareholders to sell their shares or put the bank on the auction block. The shareholders' rights are always given greater weight as against the risks posed by a bank in trouble," Buenaventura said.

He admitted, however, that it could be hard to push for those policy changes because most banks in the country were still family owned. Out of pride or sentiment, he said, these families might tend to prefer to protect their interest in the bank at all costs.

Money laundering case?

In a related development, the BSP and the Anti Money Laundering Council had advised the Japanese government that the group of Ogami could be using the Philippines to launder ill-gotten money from Japan.

"We have told the Japanese authorities that we think this can be a case of money laundering," said Buenaventura who also heads the council.

The central bank chief said that the council was suspecting that Ogami could be laundering money he raised through the illegal sale of securities both in Japan and in the Philippines.

This can be the reason why the group of Ogami bought Unitrust since it can be used to facilitate the group's money laundering activities, he said.

Piltel eyes partnership with Korean company

By Abigail L. Ho

SK Telecom, South Korea's largest cellular service provider, has expressed an interest in forging a partnership with Pilipino Telephone Corp., a wholly owned subsidiary of dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

A company source told the INQUIRER that executives of Piltel's sister company Smart Communications Inc.—president Napoleon Nazareno and personal communications and mobile services division head Anastacio Martirez—flew to South Korea two weekends ago "to move the discussions forward."

Piltel's wireless business is currently operating under Smart. Its Talk N' Text prepaid global system for mobile communications (GSM) cellular service rides on Smart's network.

SK Telecom is interested in developing Piltel's code division multiple access (CDMA) platform, the source said.

The source added that the Korean firm's interest in the company grew stronger when Talk N' Text almost doubled its subscriber base as of end-September, from 604,895 in the previous year to 1,110,063 subscribers.

Based on its end-September results, the brand is projected to have over 1.2 million subscribers by end-2001.

A local market research firm said that as of the third quarter of last year, Talk N' Text had a 7-percent share of the cellular service market.

Mobiline, Piltel's analog brand, had a 9-percent share.

SK Telecom, in a statement issued on Jan. 15, said it had formed global divisions and teams in its network, marketing and Internet businesses to carry out successful overseas business expansion particularly in Vietnam and the CDMA network construction in Asia.

For the past two weeks, Piltel's share price rose steadily. Local stockbrokers said this was brought about by reports that a Korean telecom firm was interested in forging an alliance with the PLDT subsidiary.

Piltel was the country's first cellular service provider using analog technology. With the advent of the digital era, however, Piltel lagged behind its competitors, but it later picked up steam when it launched its Talk N' Text brand two years ago.

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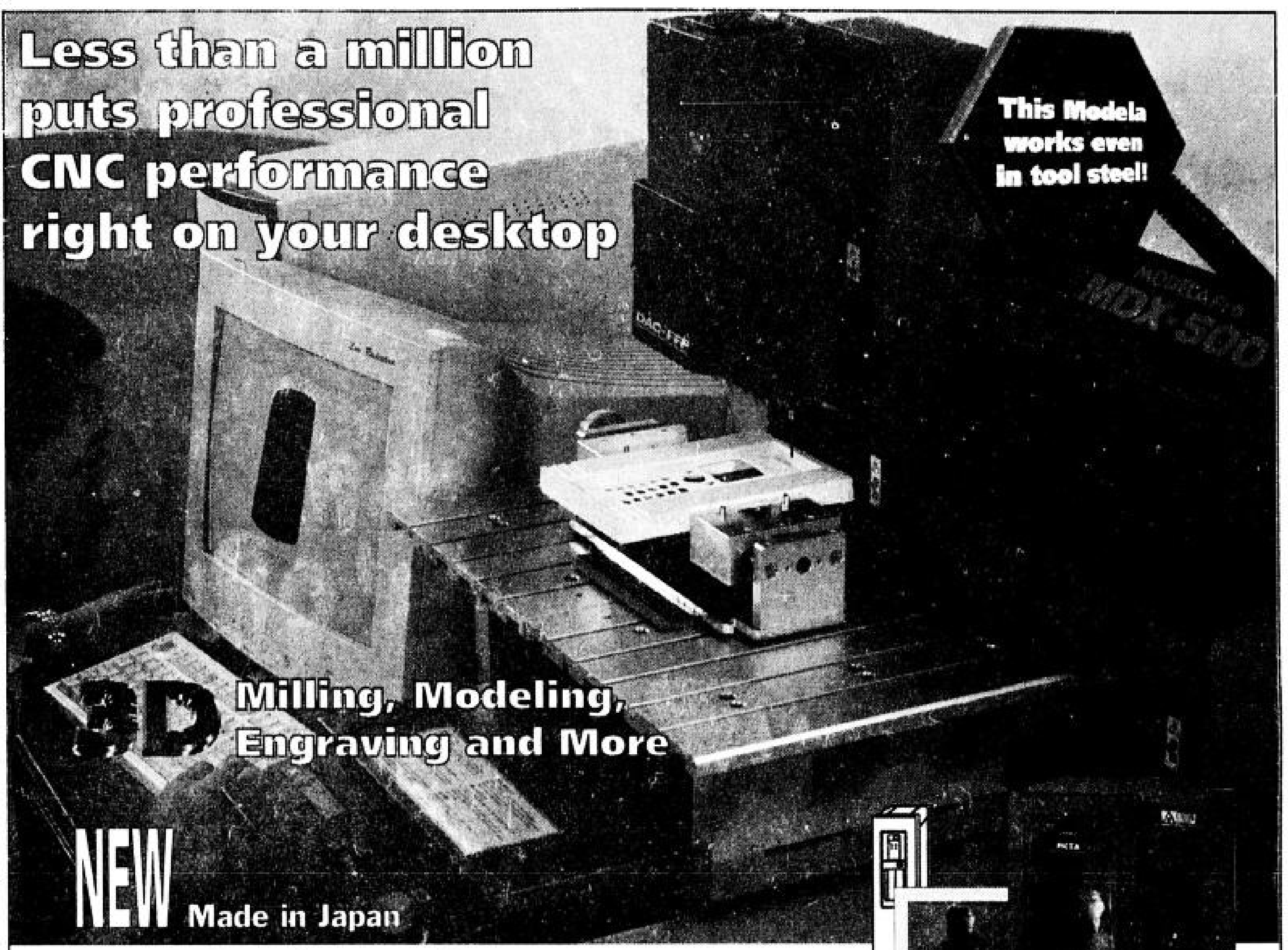
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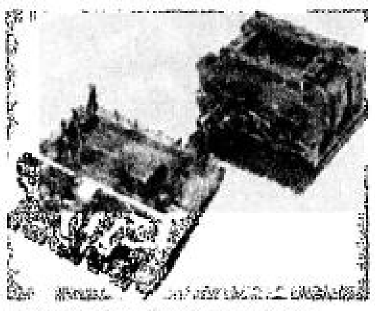
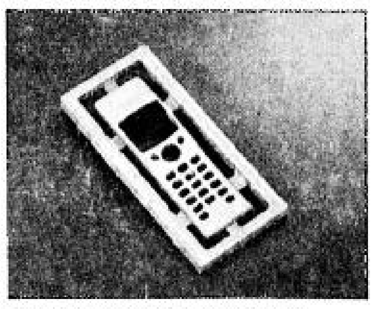
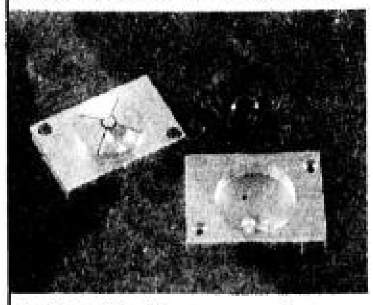
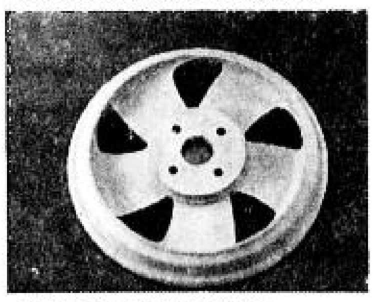
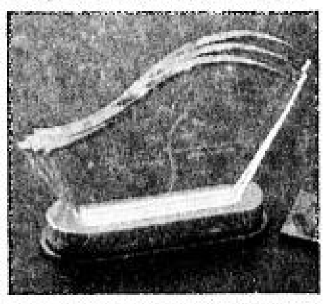

Dies for aluminum cast parts

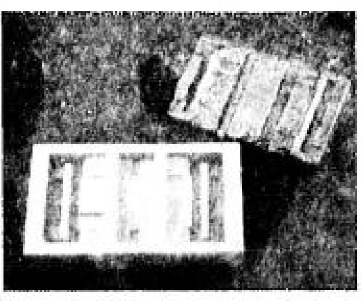

Cellphone housing prototype

Small lot production


Molds milled from magnesium


A wheel cover prototype


Fine detail engraved in acrylic


Plastic part from an alumium mold

Roughed out model for a part die

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Global economy staging moderate US-led recovery

NEW YORK—The sluggish global economy is staging a remarkable US-led comeback from the terrorist shockwave even as Japan flails in its 11-year attempt to escape the bog of stagnation, the world's top policymakers said at an elite gathering here.

Forecasts for a moderate US recovery contrasted sharply with a twinge of embarrassment over Japan, the world's second largest economy, as tycoons and powerbrokers brushed shoulders at the five-day World Economic Forum, which drew to a close Monday.

Top Japanese bureaucrat Haruhiko Kuroda, the vice finance minister for international affairs, withstood a withering criticism of his economy from Fred Bergsten, director of the Washington-based Institute for International Economics.

"A completion of Japanese reforms could unleash growth rates of 2-3 percent for several years," Bergsten said.

But "I do not see the structural reforms being made," he told a news conference. "In the absence of those reforms, particularly in the banking system, I fear it gets worse."

Kuroda admitted that his counterparts at the meeting were expressing some concern over his economy as they pondered the global outlook in the halls of a sumptuous Park Avenue hotel.

But Bergsten's comment may have been "somewhat extreme," he said, assuring journalists that the Japanese adjustment period could take just one or two years before setting Japan on a growth path of about 2 percent a year.

In any case, Kuroda said, Japan's impact on the global economy should not be blown out of proportion. "Japanese economic output is important but other economies are more important," he added.

Policymakers seemed to agree, foreseeing a worldwide recovery despite Japan's woes.

"I think we have to state that the global economy is still weak but we also now hope—and I call it cautious optimism—that really a recovery is underway," International Monetary Fund managing director Horst Koehler said.

There was a risk of the US economy falling back into negative growth after pulling out of the recession but this was not the "prevailing pattern," he added.

US Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Kenneth Dam said the latest figures showed that the downturn in the US economy had bottomed out.

"The US economy is no longer declining, consumer confidence is up, durable orders were up, unemployment was surprisingly down, but so was employment, so it means at least there's some stability coming there," Dam said. **AFP**

World Economic Forum embraces poverty fight

NEW YORK—Global business leaders and politicians, who on Monday were winding up a five-day gathering here, have agreed that poverty is both immoral and will be bad for the bottom line in a slowly recovering world economy.

Shielded from demonstrators by heavily armed police, an estimated 2,700 participants in the annual World Economic Forum conferred in a sumptuous Park Avenue hotel on the fate of the planet after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Their deliberations coincided with a rival meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where 60,000 activists challenged the notion—dear to the organizers of the WEF—that money and trade flowing freely across national borders will promote prosperity and justice.

But the two gatherings appeared to reach a common conclusion that poor people are ripe for recruitment by terrorists.

"We have to go after poverty, we have to go after despair, we have to go after hopelessness," US Secretary of State Colin Powell declared in the early stages of the forum.

"We have to put hope back in the hearts of people. We have to show people who might move in the direction of terrorism that there is a better way," Powell said.

Lawmakers at the Porto Alegre forum also rejected the idea that military action alone can halt terrorist violence, condemning in particular the Bush administration's designation of Iran, Iraq and North Korea as an "axis of evil."

In a resolution, they said they were "convinced that a military escalation will not conquer terrorism and that war cannot be the way to solve the world's problems."

It was a message taken to the streets of New York by thousands of activists who staged a festive and peaceful march towards the WEF meeting at the Waldorf Astoria on Saturday.

The Porto Alegre meeting also included harsh criticism of the United States and its military campaign in Afghanistan. **AFP**

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Tech CEOs see no rebound yet

NEW YORK—Top high-tech executives attending the World Economic Forum are generally far gloomier than Wall Street about the economic outlook for this year and see little hope of a rebound until 2003.

"We've been very cautious about the economy," said Michael Ruettgers, chairman of EMC Corp., the largest supplier of storage equipment used to house corporate data. "My own feeling is that you shouldn't plan on a strong recovery this year," he said at a meeting of the world's political and business elite.

Microsoft Corp. chair Bill Gates said on Sunday that he sees no broad economic recovery this year, countering a budding groundswell of optimism tied to recent economic data pointing to a rebound in the second half of 2002.

"I don't see any big uptick in this year. Japan certainly won't be, and the US won't be," Gates told an audience of editors and reporters attending the five-day World Economic Forum summit of political and business leaders in New York.

On an upbeat note, Gates said: "Europe may be a little more positive," referring to a rebound in its overall economy.

Their remarks contrasted with more bullish views voiced by some leading economists attending the conference.

These economists have argued that Europe was making steady progress toward recovery, but could not lead the world out of recession by itself. Japan's economy may get worse before getting better, many experts have said. **Reuters**

Profits come first, says Nestlé chief

NEW YORK—Defying calls for greater business engagement in the world's social and environmental challenges, Swiss food giant Nestlé chief executive Peter Brabeck-Letmathe delivered a blunt message here Monday: profits come first.

"Basically we have one basic responsibility, which is really to create long term shareholder value," he said.

His statement revealed a gaping divide in the business community after five days of earnest discussions at the World Economic Forum about the need to put a more caring face on global commercial activity.

"I get the feeling that the business community is starting to lose the focus on its main responsibility and that means blurring and expanding our responsibilities into areas which not necessarily are ours," Brabeck-Letmathe said in a panel discussion.

The Nestlé chief said he was concerned the discussions so far suggested that partnerships between business and government, business and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or government and NGOs provided the solution to all the problems of the world.

"I only want to point out that those partnerships can also be very dangerous and I think it would be good if business would focus back on what its main responsibility is." **AFP**

HK to see modest 2002 growth—IMF

HONG KONG—The International Monetary Fund said on Tuesday it expected moderate recovery in Hong Kong in the near term, and recommended a consumption tax as a long-term solution to reduce the government's budget deficit.

Hong Kong's real gross domestic product is forecast to rise by one percent in 2002, based on an expected rebound in the United States in the second half, the IMF said after a staff visit to the territory.

Real GDP growth in 2001 was expected to be near zero, it said.

While the widening budget deficit this year had been caused mainly by the economic downturn, the IMF expressed concern over a structural deterioration of the government's fiscal position in recent years.

"The mission therefore recommends early adoption of a comprehensive medium-term deficit reduction plan," it said in a report.

"A long-term solution to the budget problem will have to include, in our judgement, some form of a low-rate, broad-based consumption tax."

Given the poor economic climate, it was not the right time to introduce the tax but the government should start preparing for it as soon as possible, the IMF said.

Hong Kong Financial Secretary Antony Leung has said the territory's budget deficit could reach HK$60 billion ($7.69 billion), or about 5 percent of expected GDP, in the current fiscal year ending March 31.

Revenue from land sales and from returns on fiscal reserves is off sharply this year.

The government is looking at ways to raise revenue, partly through a broadening of a tax base. A consultation paper released last August pointed to a goods and services tax as the most viable option. **Reuters**

Japan to discuss banking sector at G7 meeting

TOKYO—Japan said Tuesday it would do its best to allay fears of a financial crisis at a meeting of the Group of Seven (G7) industrialized countries by discussing the condition of its debt-laden banking sector.

"The biggest issue for Japan at the meeting will be the disposal of banks' bad loans," Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa told a news conference.

"Prime Minister (Junichiro) Koizumi has reiterated Japan will take all possible measures to avoid being the origin of a financial crisis," he said.

G7 finance ministers will meet in Ottowa from Friday.

Japanese banks are under pressure to reduce a mountain of bad loans to safe levels within the next three years as part of a drastic government reform plan to lift the economy from its third recession in a decade.

Aggressive bad debt write-offs, coupled with the pressure of more loans turning sour amid an economic slump and spiraling deflation has raised serious concerns over the sustainability of Japanese banks without public funds.

"The government cannot force a capital injection on the banks unless they collapse," Shiokawa said. ***AFP***

Asia central banks cap forex gains

SINGAPORE—From Seoul to Bangkok, Asian central banks are out to make sure their currencies are not pushed too high by a positive turn in the region's economic outlook.

With the global economy stuttering back to life, Asian policymakers are anxious that strengthening currencies do not hamper their ability to compete in reviving export markets like Europe and the United States, analysts said on Tuesday.

"Nobody wants to miss out when the US economy starts moving again. You don't want to be uncompetitive when the global demand cycle picks up," said Simon Flint, Bank of America's senior strategist in Singapore.

But as soon as the dollar peaks against the yen and the global recovery becomes more entrenched, most central banks are likely to allow their currencies to reflect their fundamental strength, the analysts said.

"These are currencies for economies that have seen strong productivity gains, they have been gaining export market share over the last decade. They should be appreciating over time," said James Malcolm, J.P. Morgan Chase's strategist in Singapore.

Given the region's exposure to global demand, analysts believe Asia, more than other emerging market zones, will benefit the most from an expected rebound led by the United States—its major export destination.

Recent data suggests most economies may have already hit a trough, while strong flows of money into Asian equities and moderating outflows from corporate debt repayments as interest rates fall are supporting most currencies.

The Korean won and the Thai baht have gained more than 4 percent from their April 2001 lows against the dollar of 1,365.30 and 45.85 respectively. The Singapore dollar is up by over one percent and the Philippine peso by over half a percent since the start of 2002.

Conservative bias

Still, with the yen sickly and doubts lingering over the strength of the US recovery, central banks in the region are keeping up their guard and many are intervening to keep their currencies from appreciating too far.

"It is a conservative bias," Malcolm said. "We are in the very early stages of recovery, its tentative, a little bit too early to have a very strong view, so that sort of a cautious bias at least on the policymaker side is likely to continue for a little while."

Bank of Thailand Governor Pridiyathorn Devakula said on Monday the central bank had entered the market to maintain the baht's export competitiveness. He said the bank bought dollars recently to help boost the country's foreign reserves.

Analysts believe central banks in Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, through actual or verbal interventions recently, have also shown an explicit bias to keeping currencies capped within narrow ranges.

"If you had currencies completely freely floating they would have been strengthening much sharply against the yen and the dollar right now. The reason why they are not is that central banks are out there picking up dollars," said Peter Redward, currency strategist at Deutsche Bank. ***Reuters***

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Your kind gesture of sympathy will always be
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May the Lord our God bless you abundantly.

...and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die...
John 11:26

Fernando Martin de Achaval y Garteiz-Aurrecoa

Was called to join our Heavenly Father
on Sunday, February 3, 2002

His bereaved wife **Vilma Caro de Achaval**; son **Fernando**; sister and other relatives request your prayers for his eternal repose.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Beautiful Love Church, Chapel 2, Merville Park Subdivision, Parañaque.

Funeral Mass will be on Thursday, February 7, 2002 at 9:00 a.m. Cremation will follow at Manila Memorial Park-Crematory Sucat, Parañaque.

EVELINA "Evie" TAD-Y CASTRO

Has peacefully joined our Creator
on February 3, 2002.

Her bereaved husband **Dr. Romeo**; children **Toto** and **Cynthia**, **Tess** and **Ben**, **Roy** and **Amy**, **Chichi** and **Frankie**, and **Marc**; grandchildren **Catherine**, **Francis**, **Patrick**, **Jerbie**, **Joshua**, **Jaira**, **Kim**, **Ram**, **Aaron**, **Cheska** and **Franz**; brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be on Friday, February 8, 2002 at the Marian Hills Memorial Park, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Rosary Heigths Church, Cotabato City.

In Loving Memory of

Soledad "Solita" Velez Pangilinan

October 6, 1921 - February 5, 2002

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on February 5, 2002 at the age of 80.

Her bereaved children **Rene (Chiqui)**, deceased, **Manuel (Manny)** and **Ma. Teresa (Tess)**; son-in-law **Oscar (Oggie) delos Reyes**; and daughter-in-law **Milagros (Milette) Pangilinan**; grandchildren **Mitzi Therese**, **Andrew** and **Patricia Mae**; **Katherine Soledad**, **Anna Teresa**, and **John Michael**; great grandchildren **Mikaela**, **Danielle**, **Talisa**, **Ian** and **Keno**; sister **Josefina Nocete**; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces, relatives and friends, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal and peaceful repose of her soul.

Her remains were cremated yesterday, February 5, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City. Her cremated remains lie at St. Jerome Parish Center, Ayala Alabang and will be interred on Thursday, February 7, 2002 at 12 noon, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after a 10:00 a.m. Mass.

Schedule of Masses:

Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque
9:00 a.m.
Tuesday, February 5, 2002

St. Jerome Parish, Ayala Alabang
7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 5, 2002

12:00 nn, 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.
Wednesday, February 6, 2002

10:00 a.m.
Thursday, February 7, 2002

In lieu of flowers, donations to St. Jerome Parish Center and St. James the Great Parish Center, Ayala Alabang will be appreciated.

KA POPOY LAGMAN

A WORKING CLASS HERO

"For Ka Popoy was before all else a revolutionist... Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival."
(Borrowed from Frederick Engels' culogy to Karl Marx)

Today, February 6, marks the first year of the untimely death of Ka Popoy Lagman. He was felled by bullets fired by still unidentified assassins near the steps of the *Bahay ng Alumni* at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

It has been one year, and there is still no justice for Ka Popoy. Today, we can only pause to grieve the loss of a revolutionary leader. Are we bracing ourselves for another year of injustice?

Some of us remember Ka Popoy in his youth as an angry young man of the First Quarter Storm, marching side by side with tens of thousands of students, protesting society's iniquities. Soon after he went beyond student activism, joining workers' strikes and pickets, immersing himself among the masses and becoming a part of their lives and struggles.

In the dark days of martial rule, Ka Popoy principally founded the underground resistance against the dictatorship in every corner and into the heart of Metro Manila. He led the underground movement in forging links with the open anti-dictatorship organizations through the formation of *Laban*. In May 1977, Ka Popoy lost his brother, Hermon, a labor and human rights lawyer. A victim of involuntary disappearance, Hermon Lagman was believed to be salvaged by his military captors.

In his prime during the 1980s, Ka Popoy served as a revolutionary soldier of the masses in the hinterlands of Luzon. After the death of his wife in a military ambush, he came back to Metro Manila in the mid 1980s to reassume his post as the leader of the revolutionary movement.

Ka Popoy was arrested and detained twice in the 1990s, the first time as a leader of the revolutionary underground and the second time, as the Chairperson of the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino (BMP) and the leader of hundreds of unions protesting imperialist globalization and the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) summit.

Ka Popoy lived through the trials and triumphs of Edsa I and II. He knew that these events would not free the workers and the poor from oppression under an exploitative capitalist system. 'Resign All' was his slogan reverberating throughout the Edsa II days. He called for a transitional caretaker government and ultimately for a revolution as the only way to solve the festering economic and political crisis in society, and for the working class and the poor to ascend to power.

A week before Ka Popoy was dastardly shot to death, he was euphoric as he successfully led the Labor Consultative Assembly in Baguio City — a breakthrough in forging labor unity of which he ardently dreamt. This paved the way for the founding congress of the Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) on the day he was laid to rest.

Were Ka Popoy alive today, he would be leading the erupting waves of protests against US military intervention in the Philippines. Or he might be in jail again for championing the rights of workers, the poor, and the marginalized in our society.

Ka Popoy Lagman — a labor leader and a leader of the revolution; a revolutionary strategist and tactician; a Marxist theoretician; an organic leader of the masses.

Today, as imperialism goes on a war drive, as US troops land on our soil, as another 'war' is waged on jobs, wages and the living standards of workers, we have to renew our commitment to the revolutionary cause. There *is* no other way to honor a fine and fiery revolutionary leader like Ka Popoy than to struggle fiercely and with a passion for the cause that he ultimately sacrificed his life for - the emancipation and empowerment of the working class!

— Family, Comrades and Friends

Activities on 6 February 2002

- 7:00 AM Wreath laying at Loyola Memorial Park
- 8:00 AM Unveiling ceremony of the marker at the statue of Ka Popoy Avenida de Obrero, Marikina City
- 10:00 AM Press Conference and Wreath Laying, Bahay ng Alumni, UP Diliman
- 3:00 PM UST to Mendiola March 'Justice for Ka Popoy, Justice for the Workers!'
- 6:30 PM Mendiola to US Embassy March 'US Troops Out Now!'

Masses shall be offered and celebrated at the following churches on 6 February 2002

- 12:00 NN Church of the Holy Sacrifice, UP Diliman
- 6:00 PM Sacred Heart Parish Church, Barangay Sacred Heart, QC
- 6:00 PM Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church, UP Village, QC
- 5:30 PM St. John the Baptist Church, Tabaco City
- 5:30 PM Albay Cathedral, Legaspi City
- All Churches in the First Congressional District of Albay

We,
the family of the late

Agnes Olivares Luciano

would like to thank all those who mourned with us
from January 25-29, 2002.

Your prayers, mass cards, flowers and donations to the
ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION
are greatly appreciated.
Thank you for comforting us during our time of grief.

ADELINA PAZ y HEREDIA

Ex-Vice Mayor of San Mateo, Rizal

Peacefully joined her Creator on February 3, 2002 at the age of 91.

She is survived by her beloved sister **Esther Heredia Paz**; sisters-in-law **Salud del Rosario Enriquez** and **Virginia Basa Paz**; brother-in-law **Eduardo Hernandez Tayzon**; nieces, nephews, grandchildren, great grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their residence at San Mateo, Rizal.

Interment will be on Thursday, February 7, 2002 at Paraiso Memorial Park after the Mass at 2:00 PM at Nuestra Señora de Aranzazu Church to be officiated by Bishop Manuel Sobreviñas.

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For the needs of your departed Loved Ones the following establishments can help you.

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12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City • Tels 715-1026, 715-1031; 715-1027
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C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8509, 747-8509 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tels. (0755) 522-3451, 522-2126; (0917) 434-9976
CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, Tel. 732-0309; 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu • Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City • Tels 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City • Tels (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
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DALLUAY MEMORIAL SERVICES
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Tels. (047) 222-3605; (047) 611-1066, (047) 222-4612; (047) 224-2014
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City, Tel 894-5932 to 34
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St., Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 712-5102, 741-5125, 741-5133, Fax No. 711-3064
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219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila • Tels. 2812963; 2813034; 2810522
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No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City, Tels 641-7909; 641-1735
M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila, Tels 642-3010; 633-3602
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Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan 3011 • Tels (044) 764-0281; 678-0266; (0917) 895-0603
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1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila, Tels 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795
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Arellano St., Dagupan City • Tels (075) 515-3960, 515-6529, 522-6783; (0919) 348-7131
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Tels 826-1376; 826-0662 (0915) 712-1720
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City, Tel Nos 843-6836 30, Fax No 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City • Telefax 724-4139, 726-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City, Tels 852-8228, 852-7284
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
15-16 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila • Tels 749-3579; 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
298 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Tels 372-5064, 410-0206/07
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
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WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila • Tels 522-8848, 522-9438; 400-6394

Our Dearly Beloved

COL MELECIO S QUINTANA JR (RET)

Peacefully joined our Creator on 04 February 2002 at the age of 75.

His bereaved and loving wife **Antonina**; children **Jessie** (†), **Renato, Elvira, Oscar, Caroline, Arthur, Joseph, Juliet, Mary Ann, Ma. Luz**, and **Feliciano**; sons and daughter-in-law; grandchildren and great grandchildren; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Peace Memorial Chapel, Carigma St., Antipolo City.

Interment will be on 08 February 2002, 1200H at Our Lady of Peace Memorial Park, Sto. Niño St., Antipolo City.

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

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892-5578, 811-4361
811-4370

KALAW
528-0213, 527-3342

MEGAMALL
635-0219, 635-0220

National Power Corporation

January 17, 2002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Project: MRCC-2001-01, Construction of Mindanao Regional Control Center Building at Carmen Substation, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City (Back-up System).
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all materials, labor, tools, equipment and supervision for the construction of the Mindanao Regional Control Center Building.

   Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid: P50,000,000.00
3. Application for Eligibility is open to all Filipino Contractors with the following valid License and Registration Particulars issued by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB).

   License Particular: **At least AA - General Building**
   Registration Particular: **At least Large A - Building & Industrial Plant**
4. Application for Eligibility (legal, technical and financial documents and statements) shall be evaluated using the "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by NPC in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding; and shall be subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
5. Application for Eligibility and Eligibility Forms will be available for issuance starting **January 23, 2002** at the Bids & Contracts Management Department Office, Second Floor, Building No. 2, NPC-OBC, National Power Corporation, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of Letter of Intent, original PCAB and payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) per copy.
6. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Eligibility Forms, documents and statements shall be on **February 25, 2002** and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is declared a non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. NPC reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
8. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **A.T. CORPUZ**
Chairman
Contracts Award Committee

(PDI – Jan. 23, 26 & Feb. 6, 2002)

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED SECOND RURAL BANK OF VILLASIS (Pangasinan), INC. (SRBVI)

1. Starting **February 5, 2002**, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation(PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall receive claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed **Second Rural Bank of Villasis (Pangasinan), Inc.**
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the premises of the said closed bank from **February 5, 2002** to **February 21, 2002**, Mondays thru Fridays, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. where PDIC representatives are stationed to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors.

   After February 21, 2002, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC Office from Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, or by mail addressed to -

   The Manager
   Claims Processing Center
   Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
   2228 Chino Roces Avenue, 1231 Makati City
3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to our representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and Certificate of Time Deposit; and
   b. Latest identification document (ID) bearing the depositor's signature.

   Other documents may be required by our representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591 as amended by R.A. 7400, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Second Rural Bank of Villasis (Pangasinan), Inc. is on **June 8, 2003** After **June 8, 2003**, PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI – Feb. 5 & 6, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
City of Davao
PREQUALIFICATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Tel. No. 225-0715

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The City Government of Davao, thru the City Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee, invites contractors, classified as "Medium A" and registered with the Inter-agency Committee on Registration and Classification of Contractors to apply for prequalification and listed in the PBAC Roster of prequalified contractors to submit bids for the projects funded under the Department of Agrarian Reform - Asian Development Bank and the City Government of Davao:

Project Title	Appropriation
■ Improvement of Farm-To-Market Road of Daliaon Plantation from Barangay Hall to Purok 5, Toril District	P 11,606,122.71
■ Improvement of Farm-To-Market Road of Daliaon Plantation, Purok 5 to Purok 6A, Toril District	7,056,252.76
■ Improvement of ARC Road from Purok 3 to 5, Tamayong, Calinan District	11,012,272.29
■ Improvement of ARC Road from Purok 5 to 6, Tamayong, Calinan District	7,150,636.14

Prequalification documents, Pro-forma Letter of Intent, Plans and bid forms are available for sale to prospective bidders at the PBAC Technical Committee, Office of the City Planning and Development Coordinator, Annex A-1, City Hall, Davao City, not later than 5:00 PM on **February 4, 2002** to those contractors prequalified by the PBAC.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished prequalification statements shall be on **February 8, 2002** up to 5:00 PM.

Dates of submission and opening of bids are as follows:

Pre-Bid Conference	- **February 22, 2002, 10:00 AM**
Submission of Bids (Deadline)	- **February 26, 2002, 5:00 PM**
Opening of Bids	- **February 27, 2002, 10:00 AM**

Prequalified contractors interested to bid shall drop their 1st and 2nd envelopes in the bid box at the PBAC Technical Working Committee, Office of the City Planning and Development Coordinator, City Hall, Davao City, on the date and time stated above. Bid securities in an amount not less than two and half percent (2½%) of their total bid price proposals shall be placed in the 1st bid envelope. The sealed bid envelopes shall be addressed to the PBAC Chairman, with the name of the project to be bidded and the name of the bidder in capital letters, and they shall be marked "Do not open before (date and time of bid opening)."

Pre-Bid Conference and opening of bids shall be held at the Conference Room, Office of the City Mayor, City Hall, Davao City, on the date and time stated above.

The PBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality/defect-contained therein, and to award to the bidder whose bid, as evaluated by the PBAC, is the most advantageous to the city government.

Approved:

(Sgd.) **LEO G. DELOS SANTOS**
City Administrator
Authorized Representative of the Mayor

(PDI – Jan. 23, 30 & Feb. 6, 2002)

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED COOPERATIVE BANK OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL (CBNO)

1. Starting **February 5, 2002**, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation(PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall receive claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed **Cooperative Bank of Negros Occidental.**
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the premises of the said closed bank from **February 5, 2002 to February 28, 2002**, Mondays thru Fridays, during office hours, where PDIC representatives are stationed to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors.

   After February 28, 2002, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC Office from Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, or by mail addressed to -

   The Manager
   Claims Processing Center
   Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
   2228 Chino Roces Avenue, 1231 Makati City
3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to our representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and Certificate of Time Deposit; and
   b. Latest identification document (ID) bearing the depositor's signature.

   Other documents may be required by our representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591 as amended by R.A. 7400, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Cooperative Bank of Negros Occidental is on **May 27, 2003.** After **May 27, 2003**, PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI – Feb. 5 & 6, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
TOLL REGULATORY BOARD
2/F Integrated Bar of the Phils. (IBP) Bldg., Doña Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel Nos. 631-4673, 631-4749, 631-5025, 631-5901 Fax No. 631-5034
Email trbexdir@pacific.net.ph

NOTICE OF PRE-HEARING CONFERENCE

In connection with the TOLL RATE ADJUSTMENTS recently promulgated by the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) for the NORTH (Balintawak to Sta. Ines) and SOUTH (Alabang to Calamba) LUZON EXPRESSWAYS which are being operated by the PHILIPPINE NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION (PNCC), NOTICE is hereby given that the TRB shall conduct a Pre-hearing Conference between the parties (Oppositors to the toll rate adjustments and PNCC) together with their attorneys and the Hearing Officer on **February 12, 2002, 2:00 PM** at the Conference Room of the TRB, 2nd Floor, Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) Building, Doña Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, for the purpose of seeking agreement on ways or means of expediting the proceedings of the Formal Hearings.

Any interested expressway user have the right to file a petition with the Toll Regulatory Board for a review of the adjusted toll rates. The **February 12, 2002** Pre-Hearing Conference shall include all petitions for review submitted on or before **February 07, 2002.**

Copies of the Rules of Practice and Procedure Governing Hearing before the Toll Regulatory Board may be secured from the Office of the Executive Director in the same office address stated above.

(Sgd.) **JAIME S. DUMLAO, JR.**
Executive Director

(PDI--Feb. 6, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
860 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Metro Manila 3008
Tel. Nos. 372-50-57 * 372-50-43
Fax Nos. 372-50-48 * 372-50-61

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY & TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources, Department of Agriculture (DA-BFAR), invites qualified bidders/suppliers to participate in the bidding of **"Various Fishing Supplies"** not later than 10:00 AM on February 18, 2002.

Bid form together with complete specifications may be obtained from Property Section.

Interested bidders are required to submit the following requirements upon securing bidding forms: photo copies of Business License, Certificate of Registration/DTI, latest audited Financial Statement, latest Income Tax Return (original copies to be shown for authentication purposes).

This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by the PBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The PBAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, or does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.**
Director

(PDI--Feb. 6, 2002)

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OBITUARIES

ATTY. ALFONSO R. TORRES

of Balayan, Batangas
and PHILIPPINE FREE PRESS

passed away peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on February 4, 2002 at the age of 88.

His children **Lenit & Alexis Lainez, Benjo & Bebeth Valconcha, Arlene Valconcha**; nieces **Amparing Dimapindan & Caring Dulce**; brothers- and sister-in-law **Pete** and **Edna Alaras**, **Ruben Valconcha**; nieces and nephews, grandchildren, great grandchildren, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City.

Interment will be on February 7, 2002 after the 9:00 am Holy Mass, at the Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

HERMAN "GERRY" VILLADOR SEECHUNG

of Naga City

peacefully joined his Maker on February 4, 2002 at the age of 62.

His beloved wife **Daisy Ocampo - Seechung**; children **Benito II** and **Jane, Nancy** and **Jonathan Lim, Marita** and **Manuel Dy, Rosario, Herman II, Carina** and **Geraldine**; grandchildren **Jacky** and **Iza, Kyla, Nikka, Isabel** and **Camille, Nissa, Niggy** and **Nathan**; other relatives and friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mt. Carmel Hall, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., New Manila, Quezon City.

Cremation will follow after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass and service on Friday, February 8, 2002.

"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God." (2 Cor. 4:14)

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:6

'I'm trapped in a food chain'

By Tita Datu Puangco

I AMcurrently working in a fast food chain. I am not happy with the way things are being run in the company. Next month, I will be six months with the company and I will be a regular employee. My entry point is assistant manager. The system is not good because the cost-cutting measures implemented are not sensitive to people's needs.

For example, the meal subsidy has been reduced to a plain burger and a small cup of drink. The crew work for 4-5 hours and it is the same meal for the week. Isn't this a mean way of treating people who contribute a lot to the operations? I am fully aware that many companies are cutting costs because of the economic crunch. Higher management does not seem to care about their people. They see them as laborers, a pair of hands. Then, the salary does not compensate for the pressures imposed on us managers what with the duties and huge responsibilities. I want to stay but I am not happy. I believe you can buy people's time but not their enthusiasm.

But my problem is this. I have a bond of P30,000. My contract stipulates that I should stay for at least two years. I regret the day I signed on. I want to know if I can leave without paying the bond. Is it legal for them to confiscate the bond? Please help me I feel trapped.

Frustrated Manager

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

My heart goes out to you. It is hell to work in a place where you are unhappy and feeling trapped because of the two-year contract that you signed. What should you do? My first impulse is to refer you to a client company of mine who is the leader in the fast food business precisely because they care to sustain wholesome people values and practices at work. But that would not solve your problem.

You earlier mentioned that higher management has cut cost by reducing the meal subsidy of workers. This is most unfortunate. We refer to this as "reckless cost cutting." It may in fact increase the costs of your employers if people's enthusiasm has waned and workers end up whining and complaining. The wiser move could have been to try to increase worker productivity and likewise improve the bottom line.

It is a real temptation of management in trying times to cut on people's basic needs. But this works to the detriment of the company. When managing an enterprise, the best approach in my experience is to combine justice with compassion. If we talk simply of management's prerogatives without considering people's welfare, then we serve only the ends of justice. Compassion is being able to feel ourselves in the shoes of the other person and anticipate the impact of a management decision on people.

We have checked out your legal question with Atty. Edwin Lacierda, whom we will be regularly consulting in this column. Edwin is a partner of Lacierda, Sandico and Bermudez Law Offices with a law degree from Ateneo and Masters in Management from AIM. He is also a law professor. Edwin suggests, based on the facts as you narrated, that management has the right to call on the cash bond, if you resign within two years from the start of the employment period. He says management has two possible reasons for doing this. A cash bond seeks to prevent an employee from resigning immediately after obtaining training to work for a competitor. There is also the cost of training of a managerial employee. Requiring a cash bond allows management to recover part of the costs.

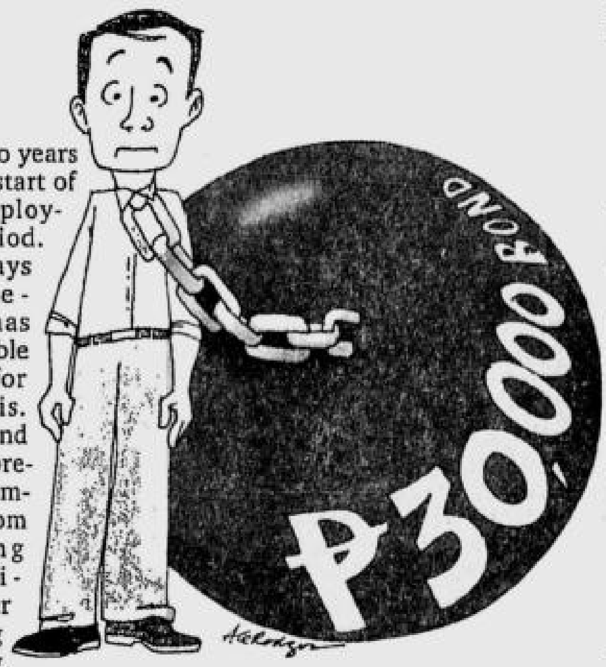

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Edwin explains further that a contract is the law between two parties. Since you were aware of the stipulation when you signed it, you are bound by that provision. On whether the stipulation is valid, it is legal because the stipulation does not prevent you from leaving the company. The stipulation does not constitute involuntary servitude, which is unconstitutional. You may leave the company but subject to the forfeiture of the cash bond. Lamentably, dissatisfaction with the company environment is not a valid ground to question the validity of the stipulation. Finally, he suggests that you seek further legal counsel and show your lawyer the contract you executed.

So, if you have no choice but to serve out your two-year contract, ask yourself what you can do to improve the work environment so that the morale and enthusiasm of people who work with you increase. Be part of the solution. Working together as a team with healthy relationships can sometimes compensate for the other aspects of the work that are less enjoyable. Use your time well. Every job carries with it learning opportunities. What can you learn in this job that will make it interesting for the next one and a half years? Set your vision and objectives in terms of learning. Then, being part of management, you may have the opportunity to give feedback so that the people in higher management realize the impact of their people practices.

Shift your paradigm. Try to see what is positive about your work. Recently, my 11-year-old daughter ripped the muscle around the tendon in her knee and has to use an immobilizer. She has to be brought to school everyday instead of her taking the school bus. At first, the experience was depressing for her, considering her independent character. Everyday she would complain about people asking her what happened and how she had to narrate the same story again and again.

Until one day we had a conversation on the positive aspects of the accident. One is the fact that suffering builds character. People who never experience early in life frustration or suffering get devastated when they experience difficulties when they are older. Another is to realize how precious are two functioning legs and that they are gifts of God to be cared for. How often are we reckless with our legs, when we walk, run or play? Then, there is the golden opportunity to love all of us who serve her needs. We are also given the chance to love and serve her more and this too is a gift. She was more peaceful after this conversation.

So serve well. Take care of yourself and God bless you.

(Catch Tita Puangco share her way of managing work-related stress by living the "rainbow life" on March 19, Tuesday, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the People at Work Live! Seminar Series. Call 897-8808 local 554 or 414-0186 for more details.)

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

Seminars help people cope with change

CAN you keep pace with our rapidly changing world? Are you still up to date with the latest trends in the workplace?

The People at Work Live! Seminar Series gives the working force a chance to keep up with the changing times. In its "Change Management Series," people at work will learn new skills and competencies that will give them a competitive edge.

On March 18, Tita Datu Puangco, president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., will discuss "Managing Work-Related Stress." Puangco will show how to enjoy work better and ensure that your life remains balanced inspite of work-related stress. On March 19, Center for Leadership and Change, Inc. vice president Lirio Mapa gives a talk on "Surviving Workplace Change." Mapa will teach how to adapt and adjust to workplace changes. On March 20, Mark Mackenzie, managing principal of S & G International Consulting, Inc., will discuss "Leading Organizational Change." Mackenzie will identify different types of change and how employees at all levels in an organization can managed these changes. The "Change Management Series" will be held from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Equitable-PCI Bank Bldg., Makati Avenue, Makati City.

The People at Work Live! Seminar Series is made possible with the help of companies who care for people at work: Equitable-PCI Bank, Amtrust Leisure Corp./ Enchanted Kingdom, ABS-CBN Publishing/ Working Mom, Edsamail Philippines, Center for Leadership and Change, Inc., S & G International Consulting, Inc., Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., Paradigms & Paradoxes Consultants, Career Systems, Inc., EC Business Solutions and Career Center, Strategic Consulting Services, IMPACT Consultancy Group, Lubid Inc., Adobo Interactive and Single Search Philippines.

Tickets are available at popular prices. For further inquiries, you may call 8978808 loc. 554 or 414-0186.

Variety...

(From page B16)

He has virtually been everywhere but his roots are in Inverness, Scotland where he was born.

"I wasn't always in consultancy," Mackenzie. Previously, he had been engaged in construction. "I studied engineering in Scotland," he adds. "I practiced it for about four years, mostly in UK. Then I realized I wanted to do something else."

When Mackenzie first came to the Philippines five years ago for some consultancy work, little did he know that he would stay. He recounts, "My partner and I chose to establish a consultancy practice here primarily because of the market opportunities. But aside from that, we had come to know the country and we liked it. We found Filipinos easy to work with. It was a fortuitous decision, which turned out to be right."

Mackenzie envisions putting up S & G branches in other parts of the region—for a start anyway. "We have already succeeded in building a reputation. Why not?" he quips.

Career-oriented

Clearly centered on his career, Mackenzie believes this reputation is a product of experience and the expectations of clients which obviously are always met. "The experiences of employees also contribute to the success of the company and help in building a sound reputation," he explains.

Mackenzie, who is profoundly motivated, would like to inspire and encourage S&G employees to be same. "I motivated them to be results-oriented, he says.

As to discipline which is often a problem in many companies, Mackenzie notes that it would be difficult for personnel to be undisciplined if there is a proper structure within the organization. Conversely, problems could arise if there is none. "When there are problems with discipline, it usually means there is something amiss in the organization."

Thirty-year-old Mackenzie, though far from being cocky, is mighty proud of the expertise he brings to his company. This expertise, he points out, comes from years of experience. Extremely dedicated and focused, the Scotsman invents inexhaustible energy and passion in his work.

No red tape

Incidentally, Mackenzie is no advocate of bureaucracy and red tape. Instead, he tries to maintain an open line with personnel and does away with formality which he finds limiting. "It restrains creativity and spontaneity. Besides, keeping communication open with the employees gives me a strong internal support. Mackenzie also works very closely with his partner Jonathan and their local principal consultant Anna. "In my experience, I have learned that a problem, when shared and spread out, is much easier to deal with.

Another way Mackenzie handles problems and the stress that usually accompanies them is by maintaining a sense of humor. "Laughter is very important, he remarks. "Our profession which is quite demanding can certainly use some of it."

Mackenzie, who describes himself as fairly fatalistic but with a very positive disposition, takes life one day at a time. While he claims to be an absolute optimist, he is pragmatic and realistic as well.

His hobbies too are eclectic. Mackenzie's spare time—"what's left of it," he kids—is spent watching movie, reading, painting, listening to music, of trying to improve his golf. He confesses to another passion: cooking. "I'm a gourmet chef," he brags. His specialty, according to him, is great food. This hobby undoubtedly adds additional spice, literally, to his life.

(Catch Mark Mackenzie on March 20, Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the People at Work Live! Seminar Series on Change Management. He will share his insights on "Leading Organizational Change." Call 897-8808 local 554 or 414-0186 for details.)

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What are your secrets for running a successful meeting?

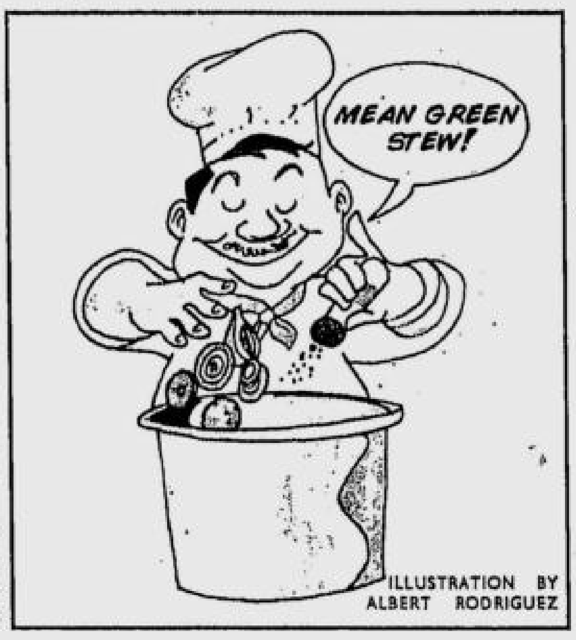
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ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

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(Send feedback to bob@workingwounded.com*)*

IN DEFENSE OF LEARNING

Learning helps us face the unknown future

By Jennifer Joy Mallillin and Anna Lea Astadan

POSTCARDS FROM THE CORPORATE EDGE

"CHANGE is the only thing constant in life," is one of the most used cliches of this time and generation. However, it is probably one of the best words of advice a person, or an organization for that matter, could get with regards to preparing for the unknown future.

As we get ready to face the fierce nemesis called the future, a good ammunition is Learning. Learning helps us move into the future with more confidence and bravado. It also lessens the threat of unpreparedness in organizations. With the emergence of a new economy, organizations that do not respond to the changing world will inevitably become extinct.

The paradigm shift to a more competency- and skill-based culture has arisen. Thus, training and development has gained importance. Training is a major area in the human resource function that aims to educate the employees in terms of their skills, work values and attitudes. It is a vehicle for learning and for personal growth and development.

Training helps an employee become more than what he was when he first entered the company. Training is also necessary to ensure that there is an adequate supply of staff capable of advancing to higher positions in the organization. However, despite the obvious rewards a company will reap if they do invest in training, some companies do not do so.

For training to become successful, the Human Resources department must first get the approval of management. Convincing management that a particular training program will indeed benefit the company is as difficult as asking a person to invest what little money he has into an endeavor that he is not 101 percent sure will reap a fruitful harvest.

Getting the cooperation of middle management is equally difficult and taxing. Middle managers often have the misconception that training is a means of solving their problems and that with training, employee mistakes can be reduced to nil. But middle managers must understand that training does not eradicate problems and mistakes. Rather, training equips people to face problems and undo mistakes.

Rank-and-file employees must also appreciate training. However, getting employees to voluntarily attend training programs without perks is a tiring task for the training officer.

Despite the problems that the Human Resources department may face in terms of proposing and implementing a training program to management and employees, once in place, training reaps countless benefits for the company both on the short- and long-term. Training can increase the confidence and commitment of the staff, provide the possibility of increased pay and promotion, and help improve the quality of the staff and staff employability. Moreover, training and development gives the employee a feeling of personal achievement and expands his career possibilities.

Training is a continuous process that begins from analysis of training needs and continued to performance appraisal of employees that have been given training. This process ensures the relevance and reliability of the training program. Based on this process, constant revision of training materials should be done in order to come up with programs that are adaptable to the times.

HR should also work hand in hand with line managers in monitoring employee performance. Training should not be delegated 100 percent to the Human Resources department. Every department—from the heads to their staff—should assume the responsibility for their own training.

There has to be a genuine commitment from top management and throughout all levels of the organization for training to be successful. If a company wants to compete in the new economy, they should invest in their people. As practitioners of training and development, we should ask ourselves, are we really doing this because it is our job or because we are committed to the advancement and personal growth of our employees? As trainors, have we become agents of change?

(Jennifer Joy Mallillin and Anna Lea Astadan are directors of the Junior Philippine Society for Training and Development.)

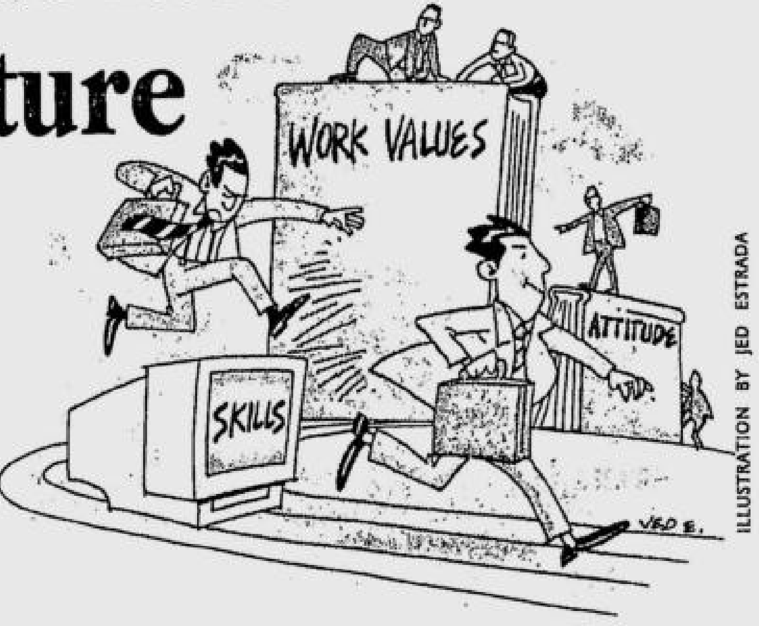

ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

A working mom journey

WORKING MOM

An Mercado Alcantara

"THERE'S nobody better than me, I'm no better than anybody else." Thus, Poncé Cruse Evans, the woman who writes "Hints From Heloise," the syndicated-household-hints column that appears in over 500 newspapers in 25 countries, explains away the tremendous power of her column. I take comfort in these words I begin my own column today.

Nobody does the working mom's juggling act better than me, but I'm no better than anybody else at it. I'm not a perfect mom, nor a perfect worker, but I try to be the best that I can be in all that I do as mom and worker. It is the sincerity of the effort that will matter most in this column.

Every week, I hope to embark on a working mom journey with you—an adventure that will allow us to be the best parent we can be while pursuing our career goals. As working mothers, we are as strong as we are vulnerable. We take the high road to parenting, wanting to be more involved with our kids, striving to be more present to them than ever before, striking a balancing act the generation of mothers before us did not even dream of tackling. We stay strong even when our youngest is sick and there is a deadline we have to meet at work. We hold up our dignity even if we drag our guilt to work. We troop to work each day, hurrying to the office or the shop, the factory or the agency, the classroom or the bureau, where we juggle our million and one things to do within, beyond and around the eight-to-five. Some of us are entrepreneurs, daring pioneers who fuel small- and medium-scale businesses from our kitchen tables. Our presence in the workforce can be a major force in shaping corporate Philippines and the way of life of the Filipino family.

We can make things happen in a big way. We just have to get together and do it. We will come together in this column, week after week, because we want to reassure each other that we are not alone. There are many of us—working women comprise a third of the country's workforce. We're a powerful group, over 10 million strong, with more than half of us slugging it out as working moms. There are enough of us to start a movement for change. So, join me.

Let's make this not my column but ours. Write me about your survival tricks, tales, and talismans as a working mom. Email me at *workingmom @pinoy-central.com*. Let's go on a crusade to convince employers that helping us strike a better work/life balance contributes to a better bottom line. Let's also campaign to simplify our lives and to take better care of ourselves, after all you cannot be the best mother you can be if you do not care for yourself first.

(An Mercado-Alcantara is editor-in-chief of the magazine Metro Working Mom (MWM) published monthly by ABS-CBN Publishing. Read more tips on how to be the best parent you can be while pursuing your career goals by getting this month's issue of MWM with Rosemarie and Cherie Gil on the cover. You can e-mail your thoughts and comments to workingmom @pinoy central.com.*)*

Leaders are walkers

RECIPES *for* LEARNING

Moje Ramos-Aquino

WE WERE discussing leadership competencies last week and our reference is the study done by Patricia Guggenheimer and Mary Diane Szulc published in their book "Understanding Leadership Competencies."

Of the 67 core leadership competencies identified by Michael Lombardo and Robert Eichinger in the Career Architect model, nine competencies for the 21st century were finally chosen by focus group participants during their research. The facilitators asked the participants which competencies they thought were essential behaviors that a leader should exhibit. After a considerable discussion, as well as some modification and combination of terms, the group narrowed down the list from 67 to 9 competencies. These are: passion, humor, courage, integrity and trust, energy/vitality/enthusiasm, building a team, setting priorities, creativity and vision.

Walking the talk

In my last column, we discussed the first three. Now let us discuss what authors Guggenheimer and Szulc wrote about the next two. The definitions are from "Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary" and "Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language."

"Integrity: firm adherence to a code of esp. moral or artistic values.

"Trust: to rely on the truthfulness or accuracy of.

"Integrity can be viewed as a set of values that we can hold ourselves responsible for and demonstrate in our behavior toward others. We can develop and maintain integrity. We develop self-awareness and become independent thinkers by keeping our promises.

"That's why we have to walk the talk. Those good words you spoke earlier are like promises. People read and hear them, and they expect the promises to be kept. But, if what they actually see is different than what they hear and read, there's a problem. Like my grandpa used to say, 'when you break a promise, more than the promise gets broken.'"

The book gave this example: "What message do you think you are sending to us when you reschedule a performance review five times?" one senior and most valued employee asks his CEO. What level of integrity and trust do you think the CEO has with this employee? How can the CEO regain his integrity and the employee's trust?

No excuses

Ang isang lider ay may isang mukha at salita base sa kanyang mga paniniwala sa buhay. Hindi siya doble-cara o paligoy-ligoy. A leader stands by his words. He doesn't blame others nor make excuses. His words and actions are based on his core values or beliefs or philosophies. People who do not have firm values vacillate and have a hard time making up their minds.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr., listened actively and made quick, firm and unequivocal rulings during the Senate Hearing on the cases of then President Erap Estrada. He did not only know the law, he is a man of solid positive values. He is a man of few, but honorable words. I can not say the same for most of our senators who were in that hearing then.

Energy levels

"Energy: the capacity of acting or being active...the capacity for doing work.

"Vitality: power to live or grow.

"Enthusiasm: strong excitement of feeling.

"People who have energy, vitality and enthusiasm are involved and pursue goals passionately. They put their hearts as well as their minds into their endeavors resulting in personal and professional fulfillment. These people tend to pursue many areas with equal abandon. They are driven to be the best at whatever they do, whether it is a hobby, a sports activity or a business transaction. These people have many professional and personal interests and are accomplished in many of these areas.

"We are responsible for maintaining our own energy levels. No one keeps up his enthusiasm automatically. Enthusiasm must be nourished with new actions, new aspirations, new efforts, new vision. It is one's fault if his enthusiasm is gone, he has failed to feed it. It is vital that we maintain both physical energy as well as mental vigor.

"A lack of this competency will result in falling short of your goals, even though you may have the opportunities. Good health is essential to leadership, so although you have heard it many times, let us stress the importance of taking good care of yourself. 'Enthusiasm finds the opportunities and energy makes the most of them,' says Henry Haskins."

Walking around

Ang isang lider ay hindi lang puro salita. Siya ay puno ng buhay at gawa. Leaders need not roll up their sleeves and dirty their hands but a regular visit to the shop floor will do a lot of wonders. Some call it "leadership by walking around." Leaders move and do with their people. They are not physically and psychologically tied to their computer, their office, their paperwork, or to themselves. They care about their people.

Andres Bonifacio fought our Spanish colonizers alongside his men. He was not only the brains of the revolution, he was the bravest of them all. He found time to make hand fans and sell them to earn his keep. He also dedicated himself to teaching his siblings in their home unable to send them to school because of poverty.

The Disney company has a regular program on this. One day in a year, the management people, particularly the executives, wear costumes and take on the roles of their regular cast such as manning the gates and rides while the cast, employees if you may, come as guests and enjoy the rides and facilities of the theme park.

First to sacrifice

Lee Iacocca was the first to take a salary cut when Chrysler run against financial difficulties. He wrote in his autobiography: "I learned about the strength you can get from a close family life. I learned to keep going, even in bad times. I learned not to despair, even when my world was falling apart. I learned that there are no free lunches. And I learned about the value of hard work. In the end, you've got to be productive." Iacocca is an American legend: the tough-talking, straight-shooting businessman who brought Chrysler back from the brink.

Take time to consider what you have just read about passion, humor, courage, integrity and trust and energy/vitality/enthusiasm. What have you learned about leadership competencies? What examples of these competencies have you noticed in others or yourself? Make notes about any areas you would like to improve upon or would like to see other leaders improve upon. Write us your thoughts by e-mail of by snail mail c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer.

(Send feedback to Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com)

What are your secrets for running a successful meeting?

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By Jennifer Joy Mallillin and Anna Lea Astadan

POSTCARDS FROM THE CORPORATE EDGE

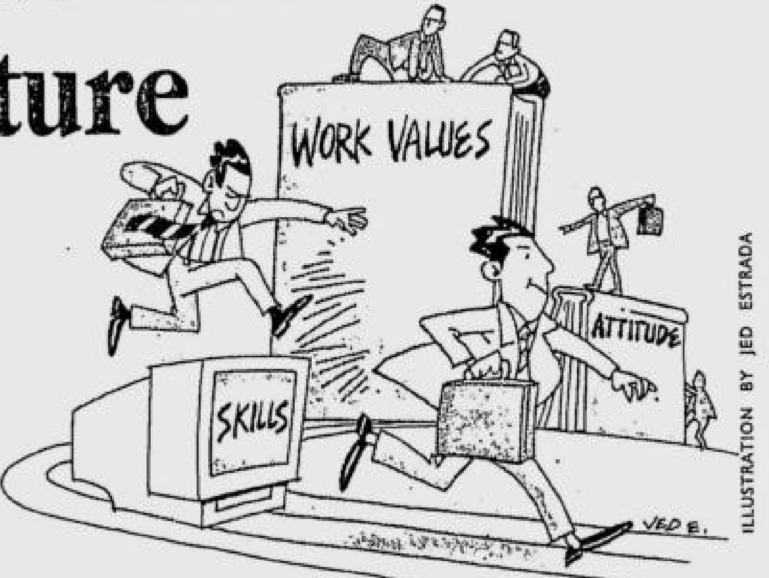


ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

"CHANGE is the only thing constant in life," is one of the most used cliches of this time and generation. However, it is probably one of the best words of advice a person, or an organization for that matter, could get with regards to preparing for the unknown future.

As we get ready to face the fierce nemesis called the future, a good ammunition is Learning. Learning helps us move into the future with more confidence and bravado. It also lessens the threat of unpreparedness in organizations. With the emergence of a new economy, organizations that do not respond to the changing world will inevitably become extinct.

The paradigm shift to a more competency- and skill-based culture has arisen. Thus, training and development has gained importance. Training is a major area in the human resource function that aims to educate the employees in terms of their skills, work values and attitudes. It is a vehicle for learning and for personal growth and development.

Training helps an employee become more than what he was when he first entered the company. Training is also necessary to ensure that there is an adequate supply of staff capable of advancing to higher positions in the organization. However, despite the obvious rewards a company will reap if they do invest in training, some companies do not do so.

For training to become successful, the Human Resources department must first get the approval of management. Convincing management that a particular training program will indeed benefit the company is as difficult as asking a person to invest what little money he has into an endeavor that he is not 101 percent sure will reap a fruitful harvest.

Getting the cooperation of middle management is equally difficult and taxing. Middle managers often have the misconception that training is a means of solving their problems and that with training, employee mistakes can be reduced to nil. But middle managers must understand that training does not eradicate problems and mistakes. Rather, training equips people to face problems and undo mistakes.

Rank-and-file employees must also appreciate training. However, getting employees to voluntarily attend training programs without perks is a tiring task for the training officer.

Despite the problems that the Human Resources department may face in terms of proposing and implementing a training program to management and employees, once in place, training reaps countless benefits for the company both on the short- and long-term. Training can increase the confidence and commitment of the staff, provide the possibility of increased pay and promotion, and help improve the quality of the staff and staff employability. Moreover, training and development gives the employee a feeling of personal achievement and expands his career possibilities.

Training is a continuous process that begins from analysis of training needs and continued to performance appraisal of employees that have been given training. This process ensures the relevance and reliability of the training program. Based on this process, constant revision of training materials should be done in order to come up with programs that are adaptable to the times.

HR should also work hand in hand with line managers in monitoring employee performance. Training should not be delegated 100 percent to the Human Resources department. Every department—from the heads to their staff—should assume the responsibility for their own training.

There has to be a genuine commitment from top management and throughout all levels of the organization for training to be successful. If a company wants to compete in the new economy, they should invest in their people. As practitioners of training and development, we should ask ourselves, are we really doing this because it is our job or because we are committed to the advancement and personal growth of our employees? As trainors, have we become agents of change?

(Jennifer Joy Mallillin and Anna Lea Astadan are directors of the Junior Philippine Society for Training and Development.)

A working mom journey

WORKING MOM

An Mercado Alcantara

"THERE'S nobody better than me, I'm no better than anybody else." Thus, Poncé Cruse Evans, the woman who writes "Hints From Heloise," the syndicated-household-hints column that appears in over 500 newspapers in 25 countries, explains away the tremendous power of her column. I take comfort in these words I begin my own column today.

Nobody does the working mom's juggling act better than me, but I'm no better than anybody else at it. I'm not a perfect mom, nor a perfect worker, but I try to be the best that I can be in all that I do as mom and worker. It is the sincerity of the effort that will matter most in this column.

Every week, I hope to embark on a working mom journey with you—an adventure that will allow us to be the best parent we can be while pursuing our career goals. As working mothers, we are as strong as we are vulnerable. We take the high road to parenting, wanting to be more involved with our kids, striving to be more present to them than ever before, striking a balancing act the generation of mothers before us did not even dream of tackling. We stay strong even when our youngest is sick and there is a deadline we have to meet at work. We hold up our dignity even if we drag our guilt to work. We troop to work each day, hurrying to the office or the shop, the factory or the agency, the classroom or the bureau, where we juggle our million and one things to do within, beyond and around the eight-to-five. Some of us are entrepreneurs, daring pioneers who fuel small- and medium-scale businesses from our kitchen tables. Our presence in the workforce can be a major force in shaping corporate Philippines and the way of life of the Filipino family.

We can make things happen in a big way. We just have to get together and do it. We will come together in this column, week after week, because we want to reassure each other that we are not alone. There are many of us—working women comprise a third of the country's workforce. We're a powerful group, over 10 million strong, with more than half of us slugging it out as working moms. There are enough of us to start a movement for change. So, join me.

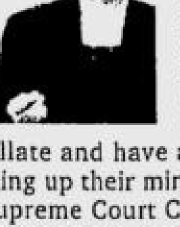
Let's make this not my column but ours. Write me about your survival tricks, tales, and talismans as a working mom. Email me at *workingmom @pinoy-central.com*. Let's go on a crusade to convince employers that helping us strike a better work/life balance contributes to a better bottom line. Let's also campaign to simplify our lives and to take better care of ourselves, after all you cannot be the best mother you can be if you do not care for yourself first.

(An Mercado-Alcantara is editor-in-chief of the magazine Metro Working Mom (MWM) published monthly by ABS-CBN Publishing. Read more tips on how to be the best parent you can be while pursuing your career goals by getting this month's issue of MWM with Rosemarie and Cherie Gil on the cover. You can e-mail your thoughts and comments to workingmom @pinoy central.com.*)*

Leaders are walkers

RECIPES *for* LEARNING

Moje Ramos-Aquino



WE WERE discussing leadership competencies last week and our reference is the study done by Patricia Guggenheimer and Mary Diane Szulc published in their book "Understanding Leadership Competencies."

Of the 67 core leadership competencies identified by Michael Lombardo and Robert Eichinger in the Career Architect model, nine competencies for the 21st century were finally chosen by focus group participants during their research. The facilitators asked the participants which competencies they thought were essential behaviors that a leader should exhibit. After a considerable discussion, as well as some modification and combination of terms, the group narrowed down the list from 67 to 9 competencies. These are: passion, humor, courage, integrity and trust, energy/vitality/enthusiasm, building a team, setting priorities, creativity and vision.

Walking the talk

In my last column, we discussed the first three. Now let us discuss what authors Guggenheimer and Szulc wrote about the next two. The definitions are from "Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary" and "Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language."

"Integrity: firm adherence to a code of esp. moral or artistic values.

"Trust: to rely on the truthfulness or accuracy of.

"Integrity can be viewed as a set of values that we can hold ourselves responsible for and demonstrate in our behavior toward others. We can develop and maintain integrity. We develop self-awareness and become independent thinkers by keeping our promises.

"That's why we have to walk the talk. Those good words you spoke earlier are like promises. People read and hear them, and they expect the promises to be kept. But, if what they actually see is different than what they hear and read, there's a problem. Like my grandpa used to say, 'when you break a promise, more than the promise gets broken.'"

The book gave this example: "What message do you think you are sending to us when you reschedule a performance review five times?" one senior and most valued employee asks his CEO. What level of integrity and trust do you think the CEO has with this employee? How can the CEO regain his integrity and the employee's trust?

No excuses

Ang isang lider ay may isang mukha at salita base sa kanyang mga paniniwala sa buhay. Hindi siya doble-cara o paligoy-ligoy. A leader stands by his words. He doesn't blame others nor make excuses. His words and actions are based on his core values or beliefs or philosophies. People who do not have firm values vacillate and have a hard time making up their minds.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr., listened actively and made quick, firm and unequivocal rulings during the Senate Hearing on the cases of then President Erap Estrada. He did not only know the law, he is a man of solid positive values. He is a man of few, but honorable words. I can not say the same for most of our senators who were in that hearing then.

Energy levels

"Energy: the capacity of acting or being active...the capacity for doing work.

"Vitality: power to live or grow.

"Enthusiasm: strong excitement of feeling.

"People who have energy, vitality and enthusiasm are involved and pursue goals passionately. They put their hearts as well as their minds into their endeavors resulting in personal and professional fulfillment. These people tend to pursue many areas with equal abandon. They are driven to be the best at whatever they do, whether it is a hobby, a sports activity or a business transaction. These people have many professional and personal interests and are accomplished in many of these areas.

"We are responsible for maintaining our own energy levels. No one keeps up his enthusiasm automatically. Enthusiasm must be nourished with new actions, new aspirations, new efforts, new vision. It is one's fault if his enthusiasm is gone, he has failed to feed it. It is vital that we maintain both physical energy as well as mental vigor.

"A lack of this competency will result in falling short of your goals, even though you may have the opportunities. Good health is essential to leadership, so although you have heard it many times, let us stress the importance of taking good care of yourself. 'Enthusiasm finds the opportunities and energy makes the most of them,' says Henry Haskins."

Walking around

Ang isang lider ay hindi lang puro salita. Siya ay puno ng buhay at gawa. Leaders need not roll up their sleeves and dirty their hands but a regular visit to the shop floor will do a lot of wonders. Some call it "leadership by walking around." Leaders move and do with their people. They are not physically and psychologically tied to their computer, their office, their paperwork, or to themselves. They care about their people.

Andres Bonifacio fought our Spanish colonizers alongside his men. He was not only the brains of the revolution, he was the bravest of them all. He found time to make hand fans and sell them to earn his keep. He also dedicated himself to teaching his siblings in their home unable to send them to school because of poverty.

The Disney company has a regular program on this. One day in a year, the management people, particularly the executives, wear costumes and take on the roles of their regular cast such as manning the gates and rides while the cast, employees if you may, come as guests and enjoy the rides and facilities of the theme park.

First to sacrifice

Lee Iacocca was the first to take a salary cut when Chrysler run against financial difficulties. He wrote in his autobiography: "I learned about the strength you can get from a close family life. I learned to keep going, even in bad times. I learned not to despair, even when my world was falling apart. I learned that there are no free lunches. And I learned about the value of hard work. In the end, you've got to be productive." Iacocca is an American legend: the tough-talking, straight-shooting businessman who brought Chrysler back from the brink.

Take time to consider what you have just read about passion, humor, courage, integrity and trust and energy/vitality/enthusiasm. What have you learned about leadership competencies? What examples of these competencies have you noticed in others or yourself? Make notes about any areas you would like to improve upon or would like to see other leaders improve upon. Write us your thoughts by e-mail of by snail mail c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer.

(Send feedback to Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com)

e-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.

PEOPLE*at*WORK

Raul O. Marcelo, Editor ▣ Regina Galang Reyes, Subsection Editor

Variety is the spice of life for change management consultant

CAREER TALES

By Cecile G. Garcia

MACKENZIE

PHOTO BY BETOY JOHNSON

VARIETY, says Mark Mackenzie, keeps him interested in his job. And appropriately so, because he is a change management consultant. It is a reflection of the rapid changes in the world that today there exists jobs that deal with managing change. "I enjoy working with different clients on different projects. It's never dull," he says. Mackenzie is a management consultant and a managing principal of S & G International Consulting, Inc., a locally based firm specializing in change management.

"Setting up S & G was an enormous challenge," says Mackenzie. "Our service is highly specialized. Mainly our job is to introduce and bring about any kind of change within organizations and companies. The change must be sustainable, with long-term benefits."

His challenge now, he claims, is to maintain the high quality of service which is S & G is known for. "It's easy to grow quickly. But it's another thing to grow and maintain quality service."

This is achieved, says Mackenzie, by constantly developing new ways of helping clients. As managing principal of S & G, he takes care of business development, which includes marketing activities. He is involved as well in all projects on a day-to-day basis.

Marketing, according to Mackenzie, is done mostly through referrals or word of mouth. "This is the best way," he says. "But we do talk to people and we do direct marketing by writing to them." Their clients range from multinationals to large local companies in all areas of business and industry.

Mackenzie takes competition in stride. "There is a huge market for all types of consultancy service," he says. "There is a market for everyone." Besides, he adds, theirs is a slightly different type of service, one which is highly specialized. "The important thing is to inform clients of our track record of success and to stress that our focus is excellent service."

Unique service

S & G, according to Mackenzie, is unique because, while it is owned and operated by foreign nationals—Mackenzie is Scottish and his partner Jonathan Allwood is British—it was founded and incorporated in the Philippines in 1999. S & G, he explains, are initials which stand for silver and gold. He and his partner fancied the initials and decided to use them as the corporate name for their company.

Prior to S & G, Mackenzie, who has an MBA from the prestigious Edinburgh University (he specialized in Corporate Finance, IT Management and Decision Support Systems, Strategy and Advertising), worked as a consultant for various corporations worldwide.

VARIETY/B14

People at Work addresses working moms' concerns

By Regina Galang Reyes,
PaW Editor

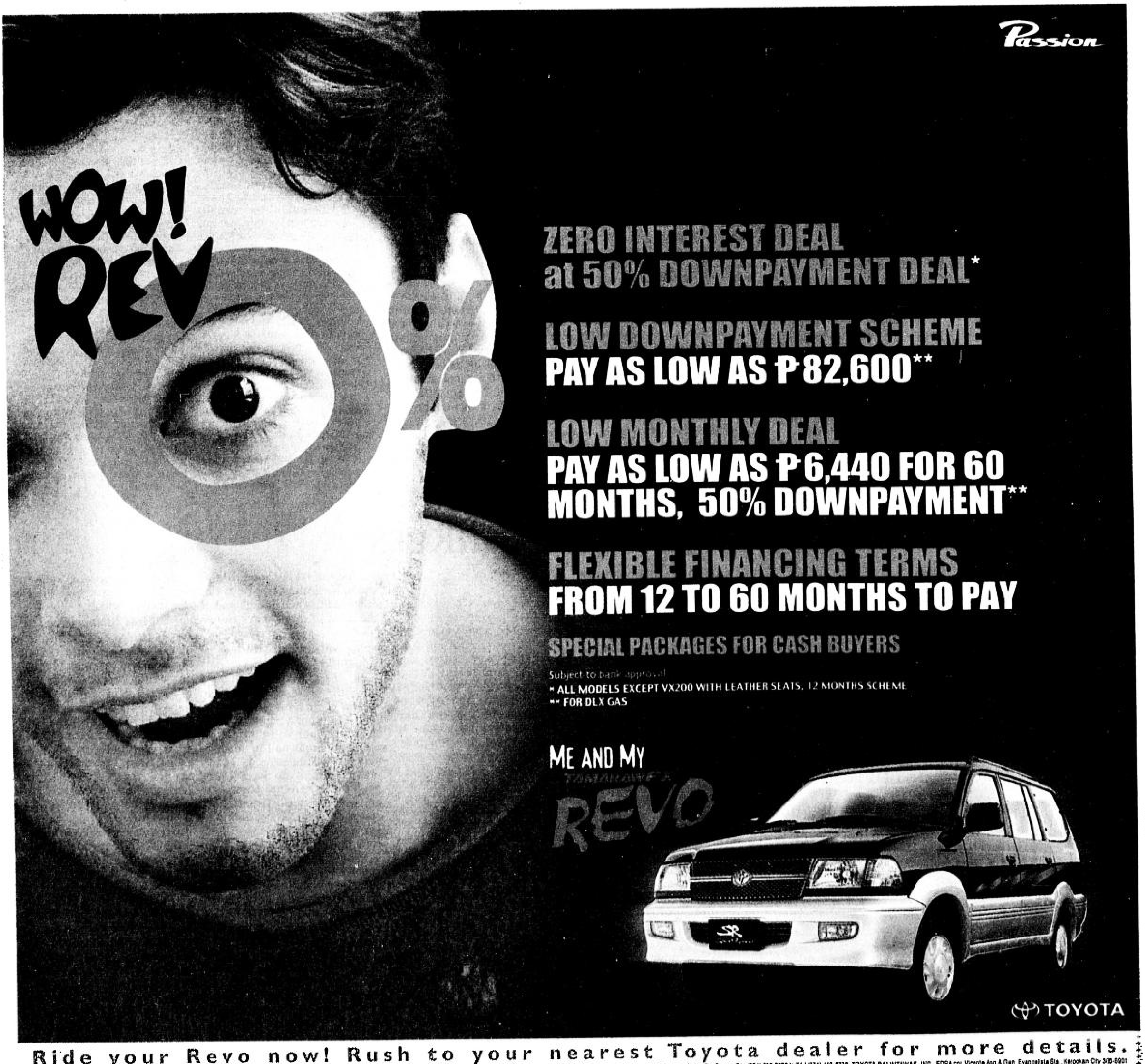
MERCADO-ALCANTARA

STARTING this issue, People at Work is opening up a portion of its pages on a regular basis for the working mom. Since the bra was burned, women at work are now a force to reckon with and glass ceilings are shattering all over the workplace to accommodate the feisty female. Come to think of it, look at any workplace and chances are majority have female professionals on board. Look at the boardrooms too and there are quite a few females sitting there making their presence felt.

Consequently, it is not surprising that People at Work's readership base reflects these developments at work. Based on the profiles of participants of the People at Work Live! Seminar Series last year (most of whom are People at Work readers), around 60 percent are female and 51 percent are married. They are also from the youngish crowd with 49 percent coming from the 21 to 35 age group. A sizeable percentage, 37 percent, belong to the top brass while 44 percent are non-supervisory personnel.

To address the concerns of women at work, particularly of working wives and mothers (since many women at work eventually wind up getting married), People at Work invited the An Mercado-Alcantara, the Editor-in-Chief of ABS-CBN Publishing's Metro Working Mom, to articulate and provide a forum for their concerns. An is working mom to 11-year old daughter Samantha. Raised in a family of writers and publishers, An was the first editor-in-chief of Good Housekeeping's Philippine edition and author of various corporate books, two of which have won national awards for public relations. Her most recent book project is "People Power 2: Lessons and Hopes." She is Deputy Executive Editor at ABS-CBN Publishing. Like other working moms, she enjoys her career in magazine and book publishing as well as her lifetime role of mom and tries to keep her sanity in both.

Working moms can turn to page B15 for An's first Working Mom column in People at Work.



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BANKING*Quarterly*

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo** ◎ *Assistant Editor* **Corrie S. Narisma**

Bad loans remain a drag on growth

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANKING sector faces this year the tough tasks of cleaning their books to rid them of a mountain of soured loans, stack up on capital to remain healthy, and polish on governance skills that may have become a little rusty.

It started the year on a sore note with the closure of Unitrust Development Bank. Although a small thrift bank, its demise highlighted governance as another area of concern in 2002 on top of the pressing problems with bad loans and its negative impact on capital.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the priority among a list of concerns for government regulators this year remained the rising bad loans of the commercial banking system and the declining ratio of their capital to assets.

"The framework for banks to operate more efficiently this year is to have a law on asset management companies or AMCs passed and for banks to be more realistic in pricing and selling their bad assets," the central bank chief stressed.

As of December 2001, the NPL ratio of locally operating commercial lenders rose to 18.55 percent of their loan portfolio to P287.7 billion from P280 billion as of the end of the third quarter.

"If we evaluate it, banks did not do so bad in 2001, considering the circumstances we operated in last year. Clearly, a lot had to be done to pull ourselves out of large NPL problems and low profitability," Buenaventura noted.

The ratio of credit whose principal and interest had been unpaid for three consecutive months had peaked at 18.81 percent of total loans in October but bank window-dressing had pushed down the ratio slightly by December.

The loan portfolio of the country's commercial banks went up by 1.83 percent to P1.551 trillion as of the end of the fourth quarter from P1.523 trillion three months before.

Former central bank governor Gabriel Singson agreed that the bad loan ratio remained one of the biggest concerns in the industry that was already working on a much improved economic setting.

"Everything appears to be working well for the banking sector as the exchange rate had stabilized, dollar reserves have increased, overnight rates are low, and the reserve requirement had been reduced. Even the economic indicators are good." If there is any problem, it would just be the bad loans," Singson pointed out.

By the end of 2001, the peso stabilized at the 51-to-$1 level from a low of 54.335 in July, while the country's gross international reserves had increased to $15.7 billion from $14 billion in the previous months.

"The exchange rate proved to be resilient against all odds. There were those who were saying that the peso would hit 60 to $1 and that we would use all our reserves to defend the peso. But none of these happened," Buenaventura said.

Singson added that the BSP's policy rates have dropped to their lowest levels in more than half a decade while the bank reserve requirement had gone back to its previous rate of 16 percent.

The former BSP chief explained that NPLs of the local banking sector had increased in recent years from an average of 12 to 13 percent during the height of the Asian crisis when neighboring countries like Thailand and Indonesia were posting a bad loan ratio of more than 30 percent.

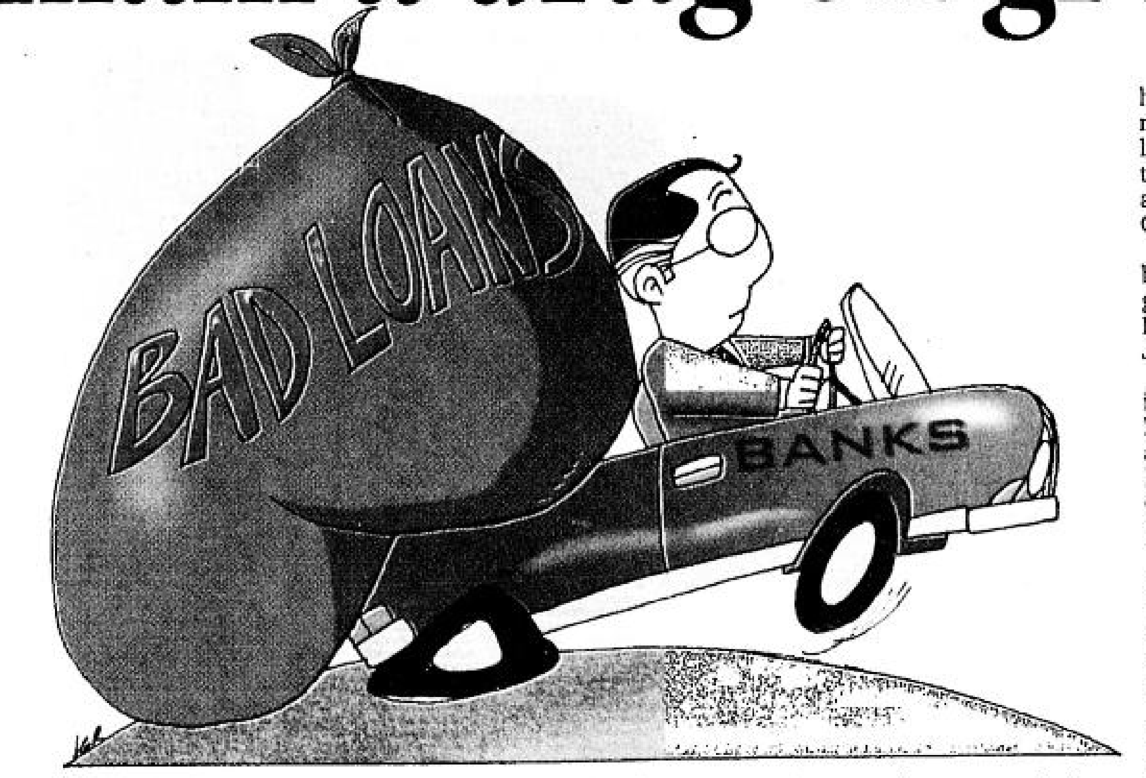
"The concern on the NPLs is that these are not going down," said Singson, unlike the bad loan ratio of lenders in neighboring countries.

This was due to the fact that the Philippine government was not in a position to assist the financial sector recover from the problems of soured loans.

"Japan had spent (billions of dollars) to save its banking system while the Thai government had spent more than 900 billion baht. The Philippine government could not afford to do this," Singson said.

"Had we adopted the same remedial measures as the other countries, the level of banks' NPLs would not have increased," Singson noted.

Unfortunately, however, the bad loans of locally operating banks appeared to have not yet peaked at current levels. Salomon Smith Barney, a US-based investment bank, had projected that NPL ratio of banks in the Philippines could go up to 21 percent of total loans within the year.



As it is, investment banks believed that Philippine banks have been understating the level of their bad loans and the problem could be much more than what was perceived.

Worried that banks' NPLs could eat up on their capital given that a growing portion of profits were being set aside for loan-loss provisions, the central bank had been urging banks to shore up their capital either through the usual equity infusion or through the so-called tier-2 capital.

A tier-2 capital is also referred to as subordinated debt. It is an investment that behaves like a deposit because it earns a pre-determined rate, unlike a shareholder whose rate of return depends on the financial performance of the company.

So far, only the country's largest, the Metrobank Group, had tapped tier-2 capital to finance part of its funding requirements. The bank with assets of P386.645 billion as of end-2001 had raised $100 million by issuing 10-year bonds to Singapore-based Dunmore Asset Ltd., a venture capital group.

Metrobank's assets had grown by 0.2 percent from P385.998 billion during the third quarter and by 5.9 percent from P365.036 billion a year ago.

Fourth largest Equitable PCI Bank had sought the BSP's approval for the issuance of two types of tier-2 capital—a $100-million bond issue as well as a P5-billion bond float to be offered to retail investors.

Equitable PCI's ranking, based on assets, had slid a notch lower last year after the bank was dragged into the "juetengate" scandal that drove billions of deposits out of the bank and forced the lender to borrow P30 billion in emergency loans from the government.

The bank's assets had dropped by 20 percent to P234.093 billion as of end-2001 from P292.459 billion a year ago. Equitable had also retired its expensive P30 billion in obligations to the BSP and Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. in December, making financial prospects this year a bit rosier.

BSP's Buenaventura had cited the need for ninth largest United Coconut Planters Bank to increase its capital as the sequestered lender's bad loans had soared to 32.25 percent of total loans in the fourth quarter from 22.82 percent three months before.

As of end-2001, the bad loans of UCPB had swelled by 42.7 percent to P20.877 billion from P14.629 billion as of the third quarter despite an almost one-percent increase in total loans to P64.735 billion.

"Once the government had taken over UCPB, then they can start talking about re-capitalizing the bank. I believe the government had set a timeline in settling the ownership dispute in UCPB," said the central bank chief.

A compromise agreement had supposedly been reached by the government and Marcos associate Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco such that a government-appointed board led by banker Edward Go could soon take over UCPB from a set of directors believed to be loyal to Cojuangco.

Sixth largest Philippine National Bank continued to account for almost 16 percent of the industry's total amount of bad loans. Although slightly lower in the fourth quarter, PNB's bad loans ratio of P45.588 billion still accounted for 46 percent of total loans worth P99.104 billion.

The improvement in PNB's soured loans ratio from 53 percent in the third quarter took place as its NPLs slid from P51.157 billion while total loans went up from P96.522 billion.

Analysts said the confidence of depositors with PNB had been returning after they became certain that the government would again control the bank through the strength of a debt-to-equity conversion.

The move would increase state ownership to 44.98 percent from 16 percent and consequently dilute the interest of Lucio Tan from 68 percent to 44.98 percent.

The memorandum of agreement set to be signed on Feb. 8 would hopefully start an earnest PNB rehabilitation program that had to be approved by the BSP.

If bad governance was a factor that had contributed to PNB's financial mess in recent years, the same problem could be highlighted with lenders that had been thrown in the middle of a controversy like eighth largest Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

RCBC is the investment bank hired by Code-NGO, a non-government group headed by Marissa Camacho-Reyes, sister of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

Some banking sources were saying that if reports were true that publicly listed RCBC had turned over about P1.4 billion of profits from a long-term government bond issue to Code-NGO, it could have a serious dispute with its shareholders.

Sources said even the Yuchengco family had been at odds over the transaction and it was partly the reason why Alfonso "Tito" Yuchengco III had resigned from his post as vice chair.

Still, RCBC's assets rose by 7.9 percent to P139.917 billion as of end-2001 and by 6.5 percent from P131.329 billion a year ago. The bank had also kept its bad-loan ratio within a more manageable level of 16.72 percent of loans.

Buenaventura has urged banks to follow the lead of Metrobank in tapping an asset management group like Lehman Brothers to help dispose of P15 billion of its P33 billion worth of bad loans.

The central bank chief pointed out that a law that would give incentives to AMCs or the Special Purpose Asset Vehicles should be passed this year to help solve the banking sector's problems and also to pump-prime the housing sector by disposing of billions of pesos worth of government home mortgages.

The incentives contained in the proposed bill include the lifting of the 6-percent capital gains tax every time a piece of property is transferred and allowing foreign groups to hold real estate assets temporarily.

"Supporting laws like the amendments to the BSP charter as well as of that of PDIC (Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.) as well as the law on asset-backed securitization must also be enacted," Buenaventura said.

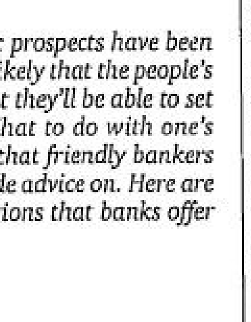
The BSP chief also encouraged lenders to merge, for bigger groups to acquire the smaller ones, for new players to consolidate with existing ones—all designed to strengthen the banking sector.

Invest in T-bills, time deposits, banks tell clients

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE COUNTRY'S economic prospects have been improving lately. It is also likely that the people's earnings will grow and that they'll be able to set aside some for savings. What to do with one's extra money is something that friendly bankers are always willing to provide advice on. Here are some of the investment options that banks offer to their clients.

Lydia Virtusio
Bank of Commerce
Assistant director for trust services group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"FOR an investment of P100,000, we highly recommend our common trust fund (CTF) called Platinum Fund. The fund is invested in secured and low-risk fixed income instruments to give our investors earnings that are comparable with those available to multimillion-peso investments. Currently, the fund has an effective yield of 8.5 percent on a 30-day placement, which is higher than the current 91-day Treasury bill average rate of 7.594 percent. Specially designed for the retail investor, it allows withdrawal without penalty charges after the minimum holding period of 30 days."

Diana Chan
Union Bank of the Philippines
First vice president, private banking group head

CHAN

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INVEST/ C3

UCPB E-Channel transactions near P1B mark

Creates new technology group to respond to market demand

CUSTOMERS' transactions over UCPB's new electronic banking channels are nearing the P1 billion mark, reflecting the increasing popularity of the bank's IT-based delivery systems among its clientele.

UCPB said that from only P6.9 million in May 2001, when the new telephone and online banking channels were launched, customers' monthly electronic transactions hit P165.6 million in December 2001. This figure excludes transactions over UCPB's ATMs, which processes another 1.2 million individual transactions a month.

"UCPB is emerging as a market leader in electronic banking services," UCPB vice president for marketing Rosario C. Tan said. "As bank customers evolve and become more technologically sophisticated, UCPB is demonstrating its ability to respond rapidly to their changing needs, giving them better channels to access banking services and to manage their financial assets."

Ms Tan said UCPB customers may now use their landline, mobile phone, personal computer and personal digital assistant to perform practically all their routine financial transactions even beyond the normal banking hours and even without going to their branch. The customers may be stuck in traffic or out in the beach on vacation and they would still be able to manage their accounts, Ms Tan said.

"People are growing more adept at using the new banking technologies, and as more and more of them become accustomed to the comfort and convenience that these technologies provide, we may see customers shifting from transacting at their branch to transacting at remote, self-activate electronic channels. This is why UCPB has been investing heavily in information technology over the last three years," Ms Tan said.

In the future, Ms Tan added, the key to winning market share will be a bank's wide range of electronic banking channels, rather than its number of branches.

E-Laboratory

To leverage on its technology investments and extend its market reach, UCPB has formed a dedicated technology research and development unit called Strategic Innovations. The task of Strategic Innovations is to study emerging technologies and explore their financial services application, Ms Tan said.

Using a project management approach, the unit surveys both the local and international consumer banking marketplace, develops products and service concepts, and then works with cross functional UCPB teams to introduce banking innovations.

UCPB began introducing a wide variety of online banking products and services in mid-2001 to respond to the Filipino consumers' desire to conduct more of their financial transactions at the time and location of their choice. The bank currently offers its customers free use of UCPB Telebanking, the only real-time telephone banking facility in the country; UCPB Connect, a retail Internet banking facility for retail customers and 1 Time Payment, an online facility offering secure and private payment transactions.

Banking by phone in real time

The only telephone banking service in the country that operates in real time, UCPB Telebanking is by far the most popular of UCPB's electronic banking channels. From May 2001 to December 2001, the service handled more than half a million transactions.

Ms Tan said that apart from enabling customer to do their banking even while they are at home or at the office, the main attraction of UCPB Telebanking is the service's capability to process financial transactions in real time. If for instance, a user send funds to somebody in any part of the country, the funds are credited instantly to the recipient's account and not an hour or a day later, Ms Tan said. UCPB accountholder in the provinces may access the service via the toll-free number 1-800-1-888-UCPB.

Multi-channel Internet banking

Usage of UCPB Connect, the bank's retail Internet banking facility is also growing at a fast pace. In only seven months after it was introduced, close to 3,000 depositors have signed up for the service. UCPB Connect processed more than a quarter of a million transactions from May 2001 to December 2001.

Ms Tan said UCPB Connect offers multi-channel access; users could make their transactions via their personal computer, Wap-enabled mobile phone and Wap-ready personal digital assistant. But what sets UCPB Connect apart from other similar facilities is its transaction notification feature. According to Ms Tan UCPB Connect notifies users of the completion of their transactions either via e-mail, text message or fax message. It also alerts the users when their account balances fall or exceed the level they have previously set or when a bill is due, which makes for a more efficient management of their funds.

In addition, UCPB Connect allows users to make future-dated transactions. Through this function, Ms Tan said users can schedule payments of recurring bills or transfer funds on a regular basis well in advance of the due dates, and thus they do not have to worry about these later. "It's very much like having one's very own personal banking assistant!" she said.

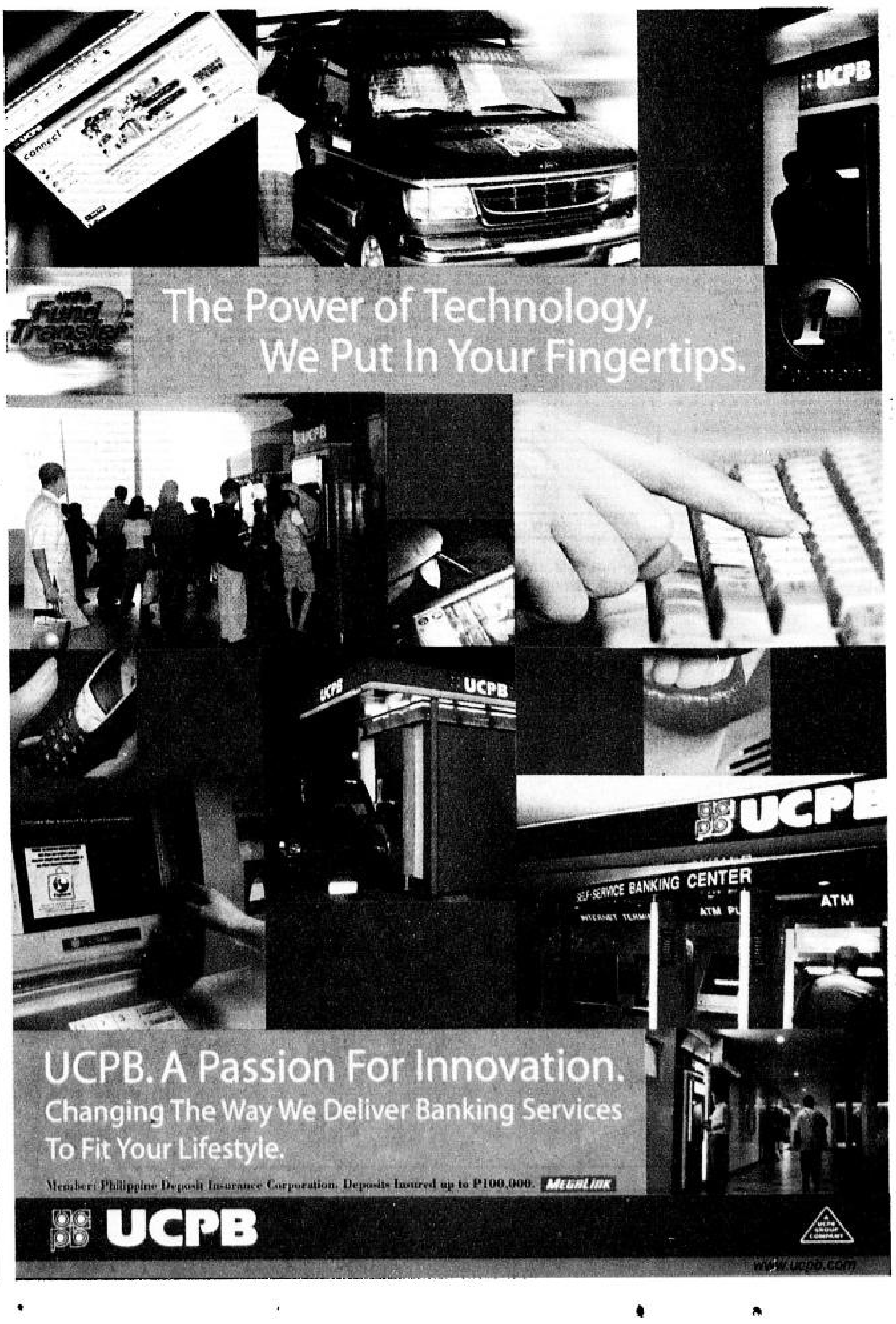
Cardless, check-less online payment

For those who would like to shop on the web, UCPB has developed a highly secure, online payment facility known as 1 Time Payment. Ms Tan said 1 Time is the first such payment facility in the whole of Asia that does not require users to disclose credit card, bank account and other financial information to merchants and service providers on the Internet. The fear that some unscrupulous individuals may get hold of financial information and use this for fraudulent transactions is what keeps most people from transacting on the Internet.

Ms Tan said users of UCPB 1 Time Payment are assigned a unique, for-that-instant-only code known as a 1 Time number on which they can encrypt a spending limit and an expiration date. So instead of disclosing their credit or bank account number, users only have to give out their 1 Time number to the e-merchants and service providers. The 1 Time number can be used only for a single payment transaction or shopping session. The amount of payment is then debited from the user's designated source of fund.

Ms Tan said that for the additional protection of the user, the 1 Time system will not be process a transaction if the price of an item purchased on the web exceeds the spending limit specified on the 1 Time number, or if the 1 Time number is used beyond the expiration date. Aside from SSL 128 and firewalls, or if the 1 Time number is used beyond the expiration date. Aside from SSL 128 and firewalls, the facility itself was designated to have built-in security for real time private transactions.

ADVT.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How the banks fared

Real & Other Properties Owned or Acquired by Banks
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

Ranking		Commercial banks	Q4 '01	Q3 '01	% Change	Q4 '00	% Change
Q4	Q3						
1	2	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.	23,403,607,074	20,736,405,330	12.9%	20,012,607,767	16.9%
2	1	Philippine National Bank	22,895,836,910	22,441,934,288	2.0%	25,238,687,172	-9.3%
3	3	United Coconut Planters Bank	20,188,909,141	19,753,759,617	2.2%	16,411,998,727	23.0%
4	4	Land Bank of the Philippines	10,885,777,491	10,762,434,305	1.1%	9,534,368,233	14.2%
5	5	Equitable PCI Bank	9,166,061,530	9,087,229,976	0.9%	8,585,537,935	6.8%
6	6	Bank of the Philippines Islands	7,707,567,867	7,556,447,440	2.0%	6,015,550,540	28.1%
7	7	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	6,638,759,603	6,640,513,688	0.0%	4,525,485,866	46.7%
8	8	Union Bank of the Philippines	5,149,402,596	5,100,227,273	1.0%	4,407,432,677	16.8%
9	9	Allied Bank	4,948,602,470	4,790,590,696	3.3%	3,873,645,656	27.8%
10	11	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	4,777,199,094	4,078,327,881	17.1%	2,498,452,810	91.2%
11	10	Banco de Oro	4,241,348,425 [b]	4,414,131,818 [b]	-3.9%	3,574,999,441 [c]	18.6%
12	14	China Banking Corp	3,492,317,798	3,191,213,777	9.4%	2,834,464,833	23.2%
13	12	Security Bank	3,439,033,612	3,398,566,567	1.3%	2,314,483,431	48.6%
14	15	Prudential Bank	3,327,100,312	2,880,388,840	15.5%	2,683,753,116	24.0%
15	13	Global Bank	3,325,767,680	3,374,831,178	-1.5%	2,007,345,155	65.7%
16	16	Development Bank of the Philippines	2,873,313,885	2,746,204,964	4.6%	2,481,832,324	15.8%
17	18	International Exchange Bank	1,786,373,229	1,785,331,460	0.1%	1,479,242,773	20.8%
18	20	Bank of Commerce	1,521,985,762 [e]	1,365,881,607	11.4%	1,139,569,469	33.6%
19	19	Philippine Veterans Bank	1,514,215,606	1,513,820,985	0.0%	1,376,481,136	10.0%
20	21	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	646,793,227	605,921,264	6.7%	519,170,396	24.6%
21	22	East West Bank	564,685,331	563,831,183	0.2%	491,726,482	14.8%
22	23	Philippine Trust Co.	411,042,051	405,626,787	1.3%	395,251,690	4.0%
23	24	Citibank	387,901,558	380,436,083	2.0%	709,125	54601.4%
24	25	Export and Industry Bank	259,506,635	259,506,635	0.0%	220,520,598	17.7%
25	26	Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]	248,792,646	253,597,091	-1.9%	218,247,555	14.0%
26	27	DBS Bank	152,089,071	155,255,523	-2.0%	202,338,619	-24.8%
27	28	Standard Chartered Bank	87,616,527	110,006,844	-20.4%	70,416,093	24.4%
28	29	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	85,000,000	85,000,000	0.0%	-	
29	30	HSBC	77,630,357	77,525,433	0.1%	6,938,105	1018.9%
30	31	Banco Santander Phils.[d]	66,742,000	66,742,000	0.0%	-	
31	32	United Overseas Bank	62,838,580	65,928,189	-4.7%	62,317,421	0.8%
32	33	International Commercial Bank of China	57,096,395	57,096,395	0.0%	58,033,245	-1.6%
33	34	ING Barings	1,590,844	1,649,574			-3.6%
34		Asia United Bank	907,219				-
35	35	Bangkok Bank	35,877	35,877	0.0%	20,089,068	-99.8%
		GRAND TOTAL[a] Php	144,393,448,401	138,704,400,568	4.1%	123,261,687,457	17.1%

Non-Performing Loans of Commercial Banks
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

		Commercial Banks	Ratio to total loan portfolio		Amount of NPL		Total loan portfolio	
Q4	Q3		Q4	Q3	Q4	Q3	Q4	Q3
1	1	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	95.00%	95.00%	440,453,074	482,867,000	463,634,815	508,281,053
2	2	United Overseas Bank	69.72%	66.77%	5,625,646,344	5,479,916,815	8,068,913,287	8,207,154,133
3	4	Philippine National Bank	46.00%	53.00%	45,588,000,000	51,157,000,000	99,104,347,826	96,522,641,509
4	9	United Coconut Planters Bank	32.25%	22.82%	20,877,060,855	14,629,668,676	64,735,072,419	64,108,977,546
5	5	Bank of Commerce	31.72% [e]	32.81%	3,517,161,768	3,511,145,963	11,088,851,024	10,702,755,481
6	8	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	29.58%	25.26%	6,707,101,040	6,208,746,230	22,674,445,708	24,579,359,580
7	6	Prudential Bank	25.97%	26.55%	5,246,980,490	5,405,268,869	20,204,006,508	20,358,828,132
8	7	Land Bank of the Philippines	25.14%	26.27%	31,029,007,915	30,595,008,822	123,424,852,486	116,463,680,327
9	12	Global Bank	24.21%	21.85%	9,067,824,643	7,386,258,726	37,454,872,544	33,804,387,762
10	11	Export and Industry Bank	23.18%	21.96%	981,372,378	983,102,668	4,233,703,097	4,476,788,106
11	13	Equitable PCI Bank	22.88%	20.99%	28,479,750,334	27,150,276,032	124,474,433,278	129,348,623,306
12	15	DBS Bank	22.61%	18.92%	2,366,192,219	2,269,406,461	10,465,246,435	11,994,748,737
13	10	Allied Bank	20.57%	22.46%	9,556,097,000	9,651,276,000	46,456,475,450	42,970,952,805
14	18	HSBC	18.26%	17.50%	4,758,388,454	4,399,949,000	26,059,082,442	25,142,565,714
15	19	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	18.10%	17.21%	33,065,767,969	30,958,483,876	182,683,800,934	179,886,600,093
16	20	Philippine Veterans Bank	16.86%	16.94%	1,145,675,375	1,018,220,438	6,795,227,610	6,010,746,384
17	17	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	16.72%	18.15%	14,183,605,000	14,308,406,000	84,830,173,445	78,834,192,837
18	16	Bangkok Bank	15.81%	18.21%	381,359,012	381,031,172	2,412,137,965	2,092,428,183
19	28	Philippine Trust Co.	14.82%	11.58%	2,432,795,397	1,959,882,665	16,415,623,462	17,011,076,554
20	23	International Exchange Bank	13.83%	14.06%	3,068,116,323	3,036,731,184	22,184,499,805	21,598,372,575
21	21	China Banking Corp.	13.74%	15.08%	6,021,664,680	6,245,691,773	43,825,798,253	41,417,054,198
22	22	Bank of the Philippine Islands	13.41%	14.31%	21,480,000,000	21,965,000,000	160,178,970,917	153,494,060,098
23	32	Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]	13.06%	9.40%	854,909,292	587,113,496	6,546,012,955	6,245,868,257
24	29	International Commercial Bank of China	12.30%	11.30%	1,276,570,027	1,241,861,835	10,378,618,106	10,989,927,743
25	25	Deutsche Bank AG[h]	12.19%	13.08%	768,300,251	768,300,251	6,302,709,194	5,873,855,128
26	26	East West Bank	12.13%	13.04%	1,004,167,191	983,570,285	8,278,377,502	7,542,716,910
27	30	Security Bank	11.71%	11.21%	3,982,503,331	3,991,817,904	34,009,422,126	35,609,437,145
28	27	Development Bank of the Philippines	11.64%	11.82%	9,456,763,405	9,217,398,785	81,243,671,864	77,981,377,200
29	31	Banco de Oro	11.23% [b]	10.99% [b]	5,122,454,416	4,867,958,980	45,614,019,733	44,294,440,218
30	14	Union Bank of the Philippines	10.93%	19.08%	2,910,430,431	3,227,294,939	26,627,908,792	16,914,543,705
31	34	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	8.94%	6.45%	794,794,272	575,974,667	8,890,316,241	8,929,839,797
32	33	Standard Chartered Bank	8.87%	7.08%	1,792,996,632	1,916,629,079	20,214,167,215	27,071,032,189
33	24	Korea Exchange Bank	8.28%	13.40%	149,725,730	203,357,460	1,808,281,767	1,517,592,983
34	35	Fuji Bank Ltd.	5.50%	5.00%	499,593,145	498,614,496	9,083,511,727	9,972,289,920
35	36	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	4.31%	3.71%	173,161,020	173,161,020	4,017,657,085	4,667,412,947
36	37	ING Barings	3.34%	3.65%	278,577,542	391,220,920	8,340,644,970	10,718,381,370
37	38	Asia United Bank	3.00%	2.61%	253,533,179	201,475,325	8,451,105,967	7,719,361,125
38	39	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	1.69%	1.98%	225,639,026	228,761,315	13,351,421,657	11,553,601,768
39	40	Citibank	1.60%	1.23%	2,132,036,311	1,747,091,335	133,252,394,423	142,039,945,975
40	41	Bank of America	0.07%	0.00%	1,728,475	44,700	2,469,250,000	2,882,117,158
41	42	Banco Santander Phils. Inc.[d]	0.00%	0.00%	-	-	2,792,183,929	2,472,105,879
42	43	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	0.00%	0.00%	-	-	1,246,000,000	1,501,121,000
		GRAND TOTAL[a] Php			287,697,905,946	280,014,985,162	1,551,151,844,962	1,523,149,146,373

Total Assets of Commercial Banks
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

Ranking		Commercial Banks	Q4 '01	Q3 '01	% Change	Q4 '00	% Change
Q4	Q3						
1	1	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co	386,645,897,300	385,998,496,933	0.2%	365,036,520,496	5.9%
2	2	Bank of the Philippine Islands	334,138,384,780	343,623,567,976	-2.8%	345,658,651,068	-3.3%
3	3	Citibank	257,314,386,555	254,078,629,470	1.3%	216,971,551,163	18.6%
4	4	Equitable PCI Bank	234,093,422,361	241,041,524,190	-2.9%	292,459,986,351	-20.0%
5	5	Land Bank of the Philippines	227,188,519,318	211,814,868,433	7.3%	208,403,672,811	9.0%
6	6	Philippine National Bank	186,468,692,813	186,657,520,896	-0.1%	195,118,519,890	-4.4%
7	7	Development Bank of the Philippines	143,778,776,423	169,693,266,661	-15.3%	174,801,271,554	-17.7%
8	8	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	139,917,137,644	129,626,485,847	7.9%	131,329,268,948	6.5%
9	9	United Coconut Planters Bank	108,341,102,149	108,954,959,502	-0.6%	111,114,049,782	-2.5%
10	10	Allied Banking Corporation	94,166,774,514	92,112,247,609	2.2%	92,262,009,713	2.1%
11	11	China Banking Corp.	81,716,704,669	76,450,013,391	6.9%	66,481,818,201	22.9%
12	13	HSBC	76,079,271,720	70,335,638,958	8.2%	60,176,437,349	26.4%
13	12	Banco de Oro	75,565,816,406 [b]	70,932,848,909 [b]	6.5%	67,549,960,400 [c]	11.9%
14	14	Security Bank Corp.	65,265,703,448	64,546,606,520	1.1%	71,482,718,447	-8.7%
15	15	Global Bank	59,611,626,860	57,453,067,689	3.8%	57,024,838,865	4.5%
16	16	Union Bank of the Philippines	54,298,230,120	53,502,411,139	1.5%	52,373,081,539	3.7%
17	17	Prudential Bank	46,165,480,661	50,297,024,309	-8.2%	48,941,007,949	-5.7%
18	19	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	39,317,058,738	40,149,602,980	-2.1%	37,072,958,286	6.1%
19	18	Standard Chartered Bank	37,385,704,504	40,772,872,716	-8.3%	36,007,938,116	3.8%
20	20	International Exchange Bank	35,923,629,877	35,511,501,059	1.2%	35,675,952,109	0.7%
21	21	Philippine Trust Co.	31,335,492,905	31,266,923,407	0.2%	27,046,838,870	15.9%
22	22	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	22,930,149,225	21,553,303,672	6.4%	24,052,047,719	-4.7%
23	23	Bank of Commerce	20,997,532,778 [e]	19,441,873,556	8.0%	19,155,419,996	9.6%
24	24	International Commercial Bank of China	17,927,131,301	18,279,975,944	-1.9%	15,095,572,087	18.8%
25	25	United Overseas Bank	16,391,882,309	16,843,585,152	-2.7%	15,942,182,010	2.8%
26	28	Deutsche Bank AG[h]	15,809,140,249	16,223,633,668	-2.6%	16,676,287,688	-5.2%
27	29	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	15,505,087,252	15,239,947,754	1.7%	12,632,458,885	22.7%
28	26	Fuji Bank Ltd.	14,916,387,301	16,841,589,518	-11.4%	14,345,205,766	4.0%
29	27	DBS Bank	14,411,081,252	16,736,148,682	-13.9%	15,452,211,225	-6.7%
30	31	Philippine Veterans Bank	14,351,813,417	12,711,919,548	12.9%	14,328,249,006	0.2%
31	32	East West Bank	13,020,595,687	12,344,218,558	5.5%	9,276,600,540	40.4%
32	34	Asia United Bank	11,705,859,157	10,701,652,127	9.4%	11,140,302,673	5.1%
33	30	ING Barings	11,683,506,953	14,520,244,056	-19.5%	18,460,075,250	-36.7%
34	33	Australia and New Zealand Banking Group	10,633,464,351	11,223,948,553	-5.3%	11,055,753,211	-3.8%
35	36	Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]	9,819,186,980	9,599,646,398	2.3%	8,003,460,967	22.7%
36	38	Export and Industry Bank	9,065,415,160	7,804,113,248	16.2%	7,729,207,922	17.3%
37	37	Bank of America	8,808,968,887	9,218,338,214	-4.4%	16,297,708,122	-45.9%
38	39	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	7,685,552,166	6,990,796,529	9.9%	8,424,266,317	-8.8%
39	40	Banco Santander Phils. Inc.[d]	6,814,282,383	6,454,411,911	5.6%	6,766,969,974	0.7%
40	41	Korea Exchange Bank	6,118,979,615	5,558,335,455	10.1%	4,211,805,887	45.3%
41	42	Bangkok Bank	4,074,211,049	4,076,692,732	-0.1%	3,453,712,610	18.0%
42	43	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	1,351,151,009	1,351,474,515	0.0%	1,920,412,901	-29.6%
		GRAND TOTAL[a] Php	2,968,739,194,045	2,968,535,910,384	0.0%	2,947,410,962,662	0.7%

Investment in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

Ranking		Commercial banks	Q3 '01	Q2 '01	% Change	Q3 '00	% Change
Q4	Q3						
1	1	Bank of the Philippine Islands	90,543,710,405	98,460,454,782	-8.0%	68,667,578,331	31.9%
2	2	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	70,400,164,088	86,952,432,958	-19.0%	68,404,085,513	2.9%
3	3	Land Bank of the Philippines	68,328,116,663	62,319,095,438	9.6%	52,322,633,365	30.6%
4	4	Citibank	38,271,380,667	36,515,404,374	4.8%	34,956,823,747	9.5%
5	5	Philippine National Bank	28,678,418,715	31,161,066,001	-8.0%	31,543,091,566	-9.1%
6	6	China Banking Corp.	24,662,237,992	23,357,284,299	5.6%	15,044,713,048	63.9%
7	7	HSBC	23,063,755,709	21,256,725,284	8.5%	22,323,471,932	3.3%
8	8	Development Bank of the Philippines	20,207,498,877	20,754,906,989	-2.6%	19,942,762,061	1.3%
9	9	Equitable PCI Bank	19,600,676,860	19,732,874,767	-0.7%	31,949,724,114	-38.7%
10	10	Allied Bank	15,884,702,955	18,010,410,401	-11.8%	21,428,830,990	-25.9%
11	13	Banco de Oro	14,391,858,867 [b]	12,875,190,978 [b]	11.8%	10,211,941,249 [c]	40.9%
12	11	Union Bank of the Philippines	14,097,066,545	14,985,113,107	-5.9%	13,702,585,255	2.9%
13	14	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	13,764,475,676	12,503,630,276	10.1%	6,149,170,882	123.8%
14	17	Security Bank Corp.	11,991,174,628	9,019,724,732	32.9%	12,499,002,676	-4.1%
15	15	Prudential Bank	11,261,847,477	10,820,129,162	4.1%	8,277,154,160	36.1%
16	12	United Coconut Planters Bank	10,077,209,250	13,848,571,374	-27.2%	10,844,766,469	-7.1%
17	16	Global Bank	9,710,736,188	9,977,659,769	-2.7%	9,479,848,749	2.4%
18	20	Standard Chartered Bank	8,213,166,273	5,953,994,854	37.9%	8,374,804,488	-1.9%
19	19	United Overseas Bank	6,597,871,877	6,681,938,413	-1.3%	5,616,310,981	17.5%
20	21	Philippine Trust Co.	6,566,561,352	5,740,466,466	14.4%	4,215,898,070	55.8%
21	18	International Exchange Bank	6,535,267,823	6,885,896,610	-5.1%	5,903,104,423	10.7%
22	23	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	4,479,732,178	4,153,747,112	7.8%	1,549,349,247	189.1%
23	22	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	4,477,443,828	4,991,361,679	-10.3%	3,030,709,228	47.7%
24	25	Philippine Veterans Bank	3,398,798,434	3,356,236,349	1.3%	3,943,979,114	-13.8%
25	24	Bank of Commerce	3,009,602,225 [e]	3,358,787,064	-10.4%	2,218,872,929	35.6%
26	30	Export and Industry Bank	2,920,617,252	1,230,986,357	137.3%	1,257,615,284	132.2%
27	26	DBS Bank	2,701,426,380	3,216,302,177	-16.0%	2,348,977,679	15.0%
28	27	Bank of America	2,351,454,733	2,610,233,740	-9.9%	2,356,010,729	-0.2%
29	28	Fuji Bank Ltd.	1,857,508,969	1,819,592,962	2.1%	1,288,125,787	44.2%
30	29	Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]	1,198,298,510	1,232,207,720	-2.8%	856,004,015	40.0%
31	31	Asia United Bank	1,031,986,300	983,420,123	4.9%	678,577,797	52.1%
32	32	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	1,000,004,375	957,200,785	4.5%	911,105,607	9.8%
33	33	East West Bank	989,175,234	896,533,495	10.3%	847,297,328	16.7%
34	34	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	941,165,244	858,166,764	9.7%	2,340,527,217	-59.8%
35	36	Korea Exchange Bank	743,553,994	781,446,379	-4.8%	827,071,406	-10.1%
36	38	International Commercial Bank of China	687,928,349	660,992,694	1.0%	651,820,000	5.5%
37	35	ING Barings	603,533,353	858,134,744	-29.7%	1,458,822,302	-58.6%
38	39	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubish Ltd.	558,473,786	551,165,522	1.3%	519,767,000	7.4%
39	37	Banco Santander Phils. Inc[d]	544,708,221	780,677,391	-30.2%	724,452,325	-24.8%
40	41	Bangkok Bank	291,173,219	287,831,689	1.2%	285,567,063	2.0%
41	42	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	1,937,342	1,888,607	2.6%	14,882,456	-87.0%
42	43	Deutsche Bank Ag[h]	-	-			-
		GRAND TOTAL[a] Php	546,636,420,831	561,420,084,388	-2.6%	489,968,837,182	11.6%

[a] Grand Totals exclude Traders Royal Bank which did not have a Q4 '01 statement of condition and Al-Amanah Islamic Bank

[b] Merged Banco de Oro & Dao Heng Bank

[c] sum of Banco de Oro and Dao Heng Bank figures before merger, except ROE=BDO only

Banco de Oro: Assets=62.7B, Bonds=9.8B, Capital=5.4B, Deposits=48.7B, Loans=33B, Ropoa=3.5B; NPL ratio=7.16%; NPL amount=2.9B; ROE=7.01%

Dao Heng Bank: Assets=4.9B, Bonds=411.2M, Capital=2.4B, Deposits=2.1B; Loans=3.3B, Ropoa=91.2M, NPL ratio=19.63%; NPL amount=653.3M; ROE=-1.14%

Source: Published statements of condition

Total Capital Accounts of Commercial Banks
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

Ranking		Commercial banks	Q4 '01	Q3 '01	% Change	Q4 '00	% Change
Q4	Q3						
1	2	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	48,392,895,673	47,841,139,100	1.2%	46,761,380,392	3.5%
2	1	Bank of the Philippine Islands	47,790,103,955	48,575,870,904	-1.6%	51,170,610,523	-6.6%
3	3	Equitable PCI Bank	44,109,163,592	44,566,563,855	-1.0%	46,174,963,492	-4.5%
4	4	Land Bank of the Philippines	18,317,851,695	19,014,091,115	-3.7%	16,888,267,970	8.5%
5	5	Development Bank of the Phils.	17,633,309,505	16,555,103,300	6.5%	15,454,471,097	14.1%
6	7	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	13,338,912,593	13,296,663,577	0.3%	13,704,077,013	-2.7%
7	6	Philippine National Bank	12,869,412,423	13,809,342,100	-6.8%	23,342,989,504	-44.9%
8	8	Union Bank of the Philippines	12,806,238,514	12,554,077,020	2.0%	11,896,904,436	7.6%
9	9	China Banking Corp.	12,716,974,989	12,420,730,948	2.4%	11,654,688,169	9.1%
10	10	Allied Bank	11,807,809,066	11,613,556,703	1.7%	12,880,618,321	-8.3%
11	12	Banco de Oro	11,078,083,191 [b]	8,424,763,018 [b]	31.5%	7,811,831,650 [c]	41.8%
12	11	Security Bank	9,021,345,385	8,941,843,948	0.9%	8,463,028,772	6.6%
13	13	Prudential Bank	8,131,730,861	7,773,382,843	4.6%	7,750,095,136	4.9%
14	14	Global Bank	7,475,729,232	7,444,637,923	0.4%	5,430,678,112	37.7%
15	16	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	6,110,568,560	6,086,931,246	0.4%	4,832,761,981	26.4%
16	15	United Coconut Planters Bank	5,780,532,137	6,924,796,831	-16.5%	10,727,346,315	-46.1%
17	17	Citibank	4,656,700,899	4,655,193,392	0.0%	2,567,909,279	81.3%
18	18	Philippine Veterans Bank	3,736,025,803	3,688,103,848	1.4%	3,801,693,106	-1.7%
19	20	Philippine Trust Co.	3,668,949,510	3,535,883,045	3.8%	3,439,364,998	6.7%
20	19	International Exchange Bank	3,621,011,686	3,554,788,675	1.9%	3,533,609,826	2.5%
21	21	Bank of Commerce	3,353,107,259 [e]	3,459,244,666	-3.1%	3,659,829,400	-8.4%
22	23	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	2,919,581,453	2,817,265,782	3.6%	2,675,999,173	9.1%
23	22	Asia United Bank	2,853,299,701	2,830,259,527	0.8%	2,575,006,591	10.8%
24	24	Export and Industry Bank	2,747,727,382	2,760,760,444	-0.5%	2,866,981,203	-4.2%
25	25	East West Bank	2,683,914,240	2,702,577,688	-0.7%	2,663,798,742	0.8%
26	29	Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]	2,566,719,457	1,763,717,619	45.5%	1,865,732,995	37.6%
27	26	Banco Santander Phils. Inc.[d]	2,559,160,995	2,517,419,429	1.7%	2,507,513,112	2.1%
28	28	DBS Bank	2,030,093,108	1,986,909,121	2.2%	2,218,067,905	-8.5%
29	27	United Overseas Bank	1,877,302,335	2,127,927,069	-11.8%	1,886,851,894	-0.5%
30	30	HSBC	1,350,000,000	1,350,000,000	0.0%	1,350,000,000	0.0%
31	31	Standard Chartered Bank	1,240,000,000	1,240,000,000	0.0%	900,000,000	37.8%
32	32	ING Barings	1,237,500,000	1,237,500,000	0.0%	1,237,500,000	0.0%
33	33	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubish Ltd.	720,433,671	720,433,671	0.0%	720,433,671	0.0%
34	34	Deutsche Bank AG[h]	625,000,000	625,000,000	0.0%	972,940,223	-35.8%
35	35	Fuji Bank Ltd.	601,912,599	601,912,599	0.0%	601,912,599	0.0%
36	37	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	570,275,984	577,740,158	-1.3%	1,327,150,004	-57.0%
37	36	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	478,394,303	595,515,855	-19.7%	250,340,141	91.1%
38	39	Bank of America	422,500,000	422,500,000	0.0%	422,500,000	0.0%
39	40	Bangkok Bank	265,831,677	265,831,677	0.0%	265,831,677	0.0%
40	41	Korea Exchange Bank	257,000,000	257,000,000	0.0%	257,000,000	0.0%
41	42	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	236,635,321	217,057,354	9.0%	174,270,192	35.8%
42	38	International Commercial Bank of China	199,026,345	447,001,059	-55.5%	108,695,672	83.1%
		GRAND TOTAL[a] Php	334,858,765,078	332,799,036,910	0.6%	339,795,645,285	-1.5%

Total Deposit Accounts of Commercial Banks
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

Ranking		Commercial banks	Q4 '01	Q3 '01	% Change	Q4 '00	% Change
Q4	Q3						
1	1	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	297,235,716,291	307,637,533,668	-3.4%	286,018,419,431	3.9%
2	2	Bank of the Philippine Islands	265,824,342,560	273,244,183,951	-2.7%	250,841,974,563	6.0%
3	3	Land Bank of the Philippines	164,946,105,443	155,201,999,959	6.3%	148,544,159,060	11.0%
4	5	Equitable PCI Bank	139,172,114,638	135,622,527,440	2.6%	176,580,425,663	-21.2%
5	4	Citibank	135,022,815,421	137,913,120,200	-2.1%	131,544,865,149	2.6%
6	6	Philippine National Bank	124,827,191,401	121,377,541,423	2.8%	123,439,631,924	1.1%
7	7	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	102,024,795,397	98,889,130,820	3.2%	93,802,175,842	8.8%
8	8	United Coconut Planters Bank	91,176,542,394	89,829,031,011	1.5%	86,035,330,036	6.0%
9	9	Allied Bank	73,891,392,497	71,383,466,843	3.5%	70,551,066,015	4.7%
10	10	China Banking Corporation	59,881,958,230	54,917,633,184	9.0%	46,335,092,585	29.2%
11	11	Banco de Oro	54,746,394,945 [b]	52,618,479,436 [b]	4.0%	50,838,107,148	7.7%
12	12	HSBC	50,707,215,742	51,227,623,439	-1.0%	40,783,955,901	24.3%
13	13	Global Bank	44,761,593,860	45,305,655,378	-1.2%	44,169,033,912	1.3%
14	14	Security Bank	39,021,881,596	40,825,577,242	-4.4%	46,175,430,300	-15.5%
15	15	Prudential Bank	35,233,622,899	34,928,050,914	0.9%	33,042,295,413	6.6%
16	18	Development Bank of the Phils.	31,256,880,853	29,361,408,978	6.5%	26,032,688,782	20.1%
17	19	International Exchange Bank	28,360,199,185	28,238,506,837	0.4%	25,729,496,621	10.2%
18	20	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	28,310,203,472	27,520,506,803	2.9%	21,455,339,256	31.9%
19	16	Union Bank of the Philippines	27,867,344,060	30,511,773,032	-8.7%	24,226,939,995	15.0%
20	21	Philippine Trust Co.	27,024,546,777	26,895,743,236	0.5%	23,024,157,308	17.4%
21	17	Standard Chartered Bank	24,586,990,481	30,120,208,880	-18.4%	27,545,775,391	-10.7%
22	22	Bank of Commerce	14,423,883,592 [e]	14,543,089,474	-0.8%	13,196,561,998	9.3%
23	23	United Overseas Bank	12,484,699,287	12,059,487,533	3.5%	10,549,445,594	18.3%
24	24	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubish Ltd.	12,311,047,609	11,059,911,469	11.3%	9,907,729,667	24.3%
25	25	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	10,447,802,343	10,921,732,351	-4.3%	7,876,083,082	32.7%
26	26	Deutsche Bank AG[h]	9,776,739,223	9,724,938,354	0.5%	9,724,987,223	0.5%
27	28	Philippine Veterans Bank	8,786,987,987	7,905,117,512	11.2%	9,616,592,035	-8.6%
28	27	East West Bank	8,402,645,909	8,974,455,843	-6.4%	6,163,084,885	36.3%
29	32	Asia United Bank	5,983,357,700	4,904,692,015	22.0%	6,818,373,318	-12.2%
30	31	Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]	5,613,416,934	5,464,777,402	2.7%	4,311,617,694	30.2%
31	34	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	4,772,073,586	3,940,422,784	21.1%	5,587,287,203	-14.6%
32	33	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	4,166,751,867	4,206,143,326	-0.9%	3,609,692,903	15.4%
33	35	ING Barings	4,106,420,375	3,712,684,313	10.6%	5,490,515,811	-25.2%
34	30	DBS Bank	4,099,106,708	6,580,995,310	-37.7%	5,725,003,586	-28.4%
35	38	Export and Industry Bank	4,071,672,537	3,256,791,051	25.0%	2,015,158,620	102.1%
36	40	Korea Exchange Bank	3,679,943,290	2,989,708,531	23.1%	1,528,971,141	140.7%
37	36	Bank of America	3,457,577,055	3,652,758,561	-5.3%	9,592,453,539	-64.0%
38	39	Fuji Bank Ltd.	3,408,433,730	3,243,332,183	5.1%	3,582,661,172	-4.9%
39	37	Banco Santander Phils. Inc.[d]	3,250,421,366	3,436,815,164	-5.4%	3,540,198,504	-8.2%
40	41	International Commercial Bank of China	2,314,082,762	2,601,832,760	-11.1%	2,428,289,254	-4.7%
41	42	Bangkok Bank	414,233,986	392,658,381	5.5%	432,923,355	-4.3%
42	43	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	284,638,037	329,550,842	-13.6%	329,422,416	-13.6%
		GRAND TOTAL[a] Php	1,972,135,784,025	1,967,471,597,833	0.2%	1,898,743,413,296	3.9%

Loans, Discounts & Advances of Commercial Banks
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

Ranking		Commercial Banks	Q4 '01	Q3 '01	% Change	Q4 '00	% Change
Q4	Q3						
1	1	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	173,064,419,582	169,547,166,714	2.0%	171,931,400,435	0.7%
2	2	Bank of the Philippine Islands	139,354,114,862	136,821,785,077	1.8%	152,601,794,322	-8.7%
3	3	Equitable PCI Bank	100,374,823,630	97,837,194,242	2.5%	120,015,883,948	-16.4%
4	4	Land Bank of the Philippines	97,472,521,437	94,639,105,471	2.9%	98,927,425,644	-1.5%
5	5	Philippine National Bank	75,630,416,597	76,969,051,156	-1.8%	83,421,087,952	-9.3%
6	6	Development Bank of the Philippines	72,737,265,018	72,336,229,620	0.6%	75,740,169,398	-4.0%
7	7	Citibank	71,743,732,352	70,308,913,053	2.0%	72,472,198,915	-1.0%
8	8	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	69,423,678,311	66,826,812,903	3.7%	71,318,839,807	-2.7%
9	9	United Coconut Planters Bank	51,846,836,821	51,450,727,379	0.8%	58,950,268,451	-12.0%
10	10	Banco de Oro	38,677,077,739 [b]	38,693,089,120 [b]	0.0%	36,343,641,840 [c]	6.4%
11	11	China Banking Corp.	37,272,493,065	36,989,365,064	0.8%	36,308,115,478	2.7%
12	12	Allied Bank	36,238,372,614	35,350,637,519	2.4%	38,376,522,700	-5.6%
13	14	Global Bank	33,717,090,067	30,539,397,150	9.4%	30,080,463,598	12.1%
14	13	Security Bank	31,466,479,793	31,881,291,238	-1.3%	32,708,801,716	-3.8%
15	15	HSBC	22,599,049,522	21,026,363,113	7.0%	18,201,955,130	24.2%
16	16	International Exchange Bank	19,871,854,313	19,763,841,862	0.5%	21,763,363,686	-8.7%
17	17	Prudential Bank	19,082,423,297	19,506,753,810	-2.2%	19,404,856,027	-1.7%
18	18	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	16,659,636,940	18,292,987,235	-9.8%	20,077,602,087	-17.0%
19	20	Philippine Trust Co.	15,007,760,959	15,280,610,110	-1.8%	13,815,915,989	8.6%
20	21	Union Bank of the Philippines	14,249,277,335	14,610,366,231	-2.5%	14,458,905,014	-1.5%
21	22	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubish Ltd.	12,576,782,125	10,849,393,249	13.7%	11,048,370,589	13.8%
22	24	Bank of Commerce	9,859,258,962 [e]	9,619,481,418	2.4%	10,575,933,887	-6.8%
23	23	International Commercial Bank of China	9,719,033,720	10,498,921,696	-8.0%	9,891,818,507	-1.7%
24	26	Fuji Bank Ltd.	8,935,970,711	9,101,475,496	-1.9%	6,806,876,138	31.3%
25	28	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	8,580,269,661	8,633,833,889	-0.6%	7,559,373,716	13.5%
26	19	Standard Chartered Bank	16,333,658,737	16,079,151,754	1.6%	14,227,696,674	14.8%
27	25	DBS Bank	8,106,273,018	9,260,788,754	-14.2%	8,987,767,545	-9.8%
28	31	East West Bank	7,864,634,978	6,983,346,324	12.5%	5,585,031,396	40.8%
29	30	Asia United Bank	7,818,946,917	7,460,011,929	4.8%	7,444,133,839	5.0%
30	29	United Overseas Bank	7,168,005,604	7,481,439,135	-4.4%	6,807,822,988	5.3%
31	27	ING Barings	6,971,340,026	8,847,588,494	-24.0%	9,784,537,460	-28.8%
32	33	Deutsche Bank AG[h]	5,397,581,829	4,745,958,952	12.1%	5,518,403,387	-2.2%
33	34	Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]	4,792,691,895	4,426,603,409	7.7%	3,628,920,139	32.1%
34	35	Australia & New Zealand Banking Group	3,863,764,908	4,275,192,738	-10.6%	3,177,637,643	21.6%
35	36	Export and Industry Bank	3,615,576,224	3,425,930,449	5.2%	4,685,821,635	-22.8%
36	37	Philippine Veterans Bank	3,281,239,855	3,212,790,321		3,896,691,936	-15.8%
37	38	Bank of America	2,551,459,759	2,815,216,800	-10.3%	3,390,784,226	-24.8%
38	39	Banco Santander Phils. Inc.[d]	2,264,126,988	2,078,502,714	8.2%	2,326,448,251	-2.7%
39	40	Korea Exchange Bank	1,726,939,534	1,413,959,229	18.1%	1,862,814,043	-7.3%
40	41	Bangkok Bank	1,714,926,434	1,376,223,205	19.8%	1,280,899,631	33.9%
41	42	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	689,166,757	742,318,006	-7.7%	1,065,260,291	-35.3%
42	43	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	249,892,135	299,593,783	-19.9%	984,841,468	-74.6%
		GRAND TOTAL[a] Php	1,270,570,965,031	1,251,998,409,611	1.5%	1,317,457,187,527	-3.6%

Return on Equity
(3rd & 4th qtrs. 2001 and 4th qtr. 2000)

Ranking		Commercial Banks	Q4 '01	Q3 '01	Q4 '00
Q4	Q3				
1	2	HSBC	22.62%	25.54%	8.93%
2	4	Citibank	22.23%	21.24%	34.90%
3	1	Australia and New Zealand Banking Group	21.93%	25.87%	22.12%
4	5	International Exchange Bank	15.94%	20.77%	4.15%
5	6	JP Morgan Chase Bank[f]	14.72%	16.01%	-9.97%
6	3	Deutsche Bank AG[h]	14.06%	24.99%	
7	7	Bank of the Philippine Islands	12.51%	14.27%	7.32%
8	9	Asia United Bank	10.33%	10.55%	8.52%
9	10	Development Bank of the Philippines	9.95%	10.35%	0.88%
10	15	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Bank Corp.	8.75%	8.97%	10.65%
11	12	Land Bank of the Philippines	8.47%	8.39%	2.79%
12	8	ING Barings	7.99%	13.53%	2.91%
13	11	Union Bank of the Philippines	7.45%	8.45%	6.70%
14	13	China Banking Corp.	7.29%	7.97%	5.80%
15	21	Philippine Trust Co.	6.51%	3.68%	9.64%
16	16	Banco de Oro	5.69% [b]	5.88% [b]	7.01% [c]
17	14	Philippine Veterans Bank	5.48%	6.58%	6.30%
18	17	Security Bank Corp.	4.84%	5.80%	5.23%
19	20	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.	4.39%	4.31%	3.56%
20	19	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	4.06%	5.19%	3.06%
21	26	Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd.	3.80%	2.65%	9.96%
22	23	Global Bank	3.35%	3.52%	1.05%
23	18	Allied Banking Corporation	3.03%	5.38%	2.36%
24	25	Banco Santander Phils. Inc.[d]	2.57%	3.00%	2.76%
25	28	East West Bank	2.46%	2.04%	0.46%
26	27	Bangkok Bank	1.75%	2.51%	-12.38%
27	22	Philippine Bank of Communications[h]	1.54%	3.57%	
28	34	Standard Chartered Bank	1.54%	-0.56%	-0.59%
29	31	Korea Exchange Bank	1.49%	0.52%	2.03%
30	29	Fuji Bank Ltd.	1.00%	2.00%	5.60%
31	30	Export and Industry Bank	0.85%	1.01%	2.12%
32	36	Prudential Bank	0.63%	-0.76%	3.91%
33	32	Equitable PCI Bank	0.33%	0.10%	3.33%
34	33	Bank of Commerce	0.00% [e]	0.00%	0.50%
35	24	International Commercial Bank of China	-8.55%	3.45%	-5.78%
36	37	DBS Bank	-13.78%	-21.04%	4.82%
37	35	Bank of America	-28.21%	-4.77%	-1.13%
38	38	United Coconut Planters Bank	-41.59%	-39.35%	1.56%
39	39	Philippine National Bank	-48.00%	-49.00%	5.00%
40	40	United Overseas Bank	-48.98%	-52.77%	-39.35%
41	41	TA Bank of the Philippines[h]	-55.23%	-62.00%	
		Maybank Phils. Inc.[g]			

[d] Banco Santander total loan portfolio amount derived from its reported Dosri amount & Dosri ratio

[e] Merged with **Traders Royal Bank** by 4th Qtr 2001, but Q4 '01 statement does not reflect figures of merged entity

[f] Formerly **Chase Manhattan Bank**, Total loan portfolio for 3rd & 4th Qtrs 2001 given by **JP Morgan Chase**

[g] Since the bank incurred a net loss, reported ROE was "N/A"

[h] No reported ROE for the period

Compiled by: Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

SERGIO EDEZA

Time for the government to cash in

WHEN Sergio Edeza was appointed national treasurer a year ago, his return to the government drew mixed reactions. While most believed he would do a good job, some doubted whether years of working for a high-paying private bank had dampened his dedication to public service.

In a year, Edeza, former treasury department head of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, brought down the 91-day treasury bill rate to its lowest in 15 years and the longer tenors to single-digit levels. He did this at a time when the government was borrowing heavily from the local market, a situation that normally would have led to higher interest rates.

It helped that the central bank's policy rates were also falling, and that the government handled its budget deficit well. Unique borrowing exercises also eased the pressure on the National Treasury to borrow excessively from the domestic money market.

Edeza's skillful handling of the nuances of the fixed-income market has brought down the cost of the government's borrowing. He has ensured that banks and insurance companies will not go overboard, meeting them halfway at times and often deciding to reject offers that, to him, do not reflect fairly the state of the government's finances. He does not hesitate using adjectives like "greedy" to describe market players when he feels that they are raising objections just to create tension and consequently jack up rates.

A problem with personal finances—a consequence of a drastic pay cut when he moved to the Bureau of Treasury from a lucrative post with the country's top lender—nearly forced him to give up a government career, but a supportive family came to his rescue.

Even with the rate of government securities already at low levels, Edeza believes his task is not yet over. His next challenge is to bring down the cost of funds for domestic borrowers so they too can enjoy the fruits of a low-interest-rate regime.

Q: Where do you think interest rates are headed this year?

A: My view is based on talks that (Economic Planning) Secretary (Dante) Canlas wants to lower the inflation outlook, and the (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) saying that if inflation is lower, it is willing to cut rates some more. Given that the BSP has now adopted inflation targeting and given the favorable inflation outlook, I would say, conservatively, interest rates would be very, very stable this year. We may even see a fall. The government's borrowing program is also tilted towards foreign (sources) rather than local. Therefore, there will be more funds in the local market chasing after investments. Because of that, we will see rates moving down. It will be very good for the government.

I think this is also the right time for the government to think about locking in its gains by issuing longer-dated bonds so that when rates move up, you don't need to issue long-term (bonds) but can just go for the short end of the curve. We also have to make sure that there is no bunching of maturities. So from time to time, we should issue longer-dated instruments. But we should issue more when interest rates are low, and because we think interest rates are going to be low this year, we are reviewing the program on whether we should issue more and more long-term (instruments). In fact, we are thinking of issuing a 20-year bond. Hopefully, we can do it in the first quarter because this is the opportunistic moment for us. It is a judgment call, but who would not want to issue when rates are this low? Remember, the last 20-year (bond) was issued at 14-point-something percent. That was a very big issue. If we see rates moving in that direction, why not? So maybe (we can issue) a 20-year or a new 25-year bond, so that we can manage the maturity of the government.

Where did we see the one-year rate last year? It went as high as 13 percent or even 14 percent. So if we issue a 20-year bond at 14 percent, then we're still better off. I think, for us, we should be more proactive in identifying the cycles and taking advantage of them. When the rates are perceived to be low, we should be there to issue a bond that will be able to lock in the government's gains.

Q: How low do you think the benchmark rates will fall this year?

A: I think the short end will really fall. You can see rates moving to the 7-percent level. Right now, we're already at 8 percent, so if the BSP has appetite to cut rates some more, we might see it lower to that level. But I'm not sure about the long end. The long end is more a function of demand and supply and because no one wants to bet that interest rates will be low for the next 10 or 20 years. As the market looks at economic activity getting bigger and better, we'll see a steeping of the curve. That's why we should issue the bonds now because the curve is flat.

Q: Will you be doing more swaps?

A: We are open to that because it has really lowered our cost of external financing. The three-year bonds were issued at 170 basis points over Libor (London interbank offering rate) when the three-year rate at that time was about 350 over Libor, so we saved about 180 basis points. We issued the five-year bonds at 180 basis points, when the five-year rate was about 450 basis points. So we would like to do that too because it is an opportunity. However, we cannot issue huge amounts because it is hedged back here; it is swapped into the local market. We should only be issuing just enough. Another reason why we do not like to issue a big amount is that the tenors are not long. It is only good for three or five years, so we should also manage our maturities. We do not want to overly exhaust the part of our maturities where there is too much already.

Q: You have been talking about innovative products. Would any of these involve securitization?

A: You have heard the (finance) secretary talk about it, but that is on the foreign side. On the domestic side, I think that what we have issued before, which are closest to securitization, are the progress bonds. I am not sure about securitization, but I would like to issue more instruments like swaps, the lengthening of maturities.

Q: Would you consider issuing more "Peace" bonds?

A: Not another "Peace" bond issue but another 10-year zero coupon issue. Of course, the features are always dependent on the instrument, but we will address the insurance companies' requirements. Insurance companies have hurdle rates that they look at, and zeroes really address insurance company requirements because of the yield to maturity and the yield of the investment. Also, the investment risk is not there. If the rates are good enough, then we might as well issue a zero because there is demand for that, although the features may not be the same. Although we still have a balance of that other zero coupons that we issued before, certainly we would never issue it as a "Peace" bond because that was not the name we gave it. It was issued as a zero coupon bond with a liquidity feature and a tax feature.

Q: Was it not Code-NGO that proposed those bonds?

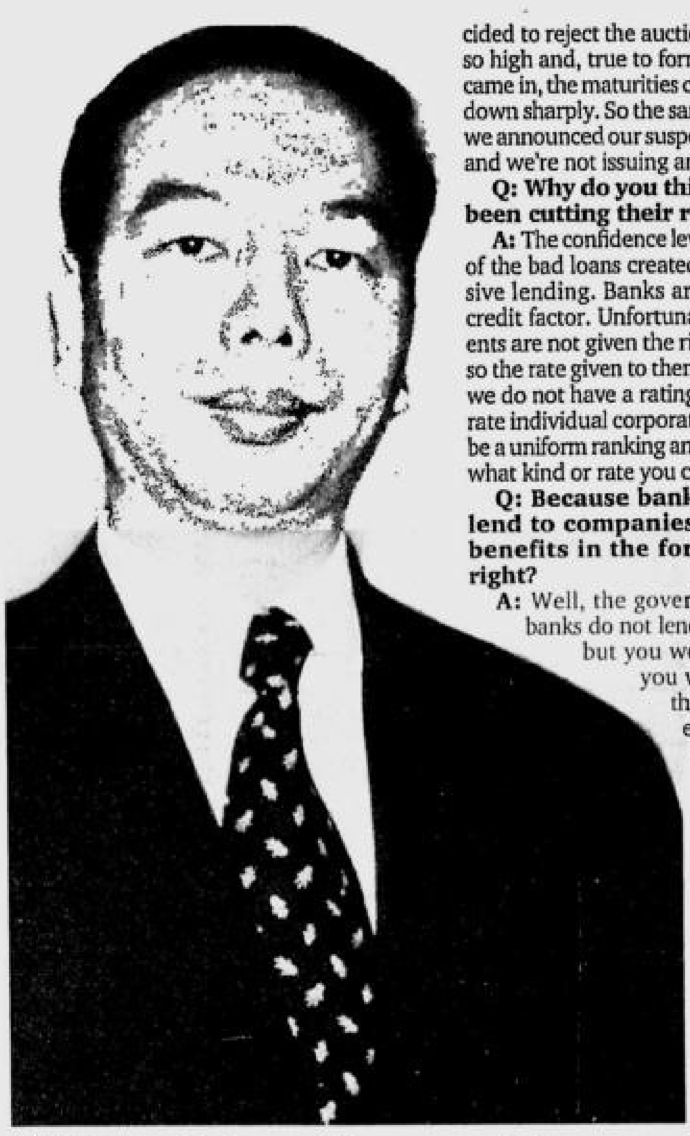
A: There was a proposal, but we never adopted the proposal. There were many proponents for a zero. There was First Metro, there was Security Bank. I think BPI Capital. That's why we said if there were many proposals for a zero, why don't we just auction it. We've got these features, so why don't we just announce it? If you win, you win. If you don't, you don't. It's just a matter of pricing.

Q: Could you explain further why it is good to issue the bonds now?

A: To take advantage of this time when rates are low and while the market is talking of more cuts on the back of the BSP liquidity rate cut. Of course, it's a timing issue. You don't know when the best time is. We might issue it now, and suddenly the BSP cuts reserves further, and they cut interest rates. That's just something we have to take. Then we may want to issue some more.

Q: The BAP will establish a fixed-income exchange this year. How will you participate in that?

A: Since we are just an issuer, we do not really participate in that market. We only participate in terms of the delivery system. What we want to improve on is the delivery system because we do not have a true delivery payment system. We are willing to work with the central bank to create a true deliver-versus-payment system, so it can be beneficial to market participants. The fixed exchange board is a good vehicle for the market to make trading of securities more active. It's more important to have the delivery-versus-payment system because they may not be able to trade as much as they want to if the delivery system is not functioning. Our role is to provide infrastructure together with the central bank.



EDEZA: Interest rates would be very, very stable.

Q: How would you describe the current system? What has to be fixed exactly?

A: What has to be fixed is the payment portion because you can transfer bonds from the Bureau of Treasury's side, but there's always the risk that the payment cannot be made because the payment is done by the central bank, and it's not done simultaneously. It has to be done simultaneously so that if you were the seller of the bonds, you should be comfortable that payment has been made. Now, there's no failure because there is a sort of BSP accommodation, but one should not live on accommodation. One should live on the efficiency of the system in delivery because, at one point in the future, you don't know if there will be a failure. Although there are controls to avoid a failure, it is better to have a seamless computerized transfer than putting all the controls there.

Q: Can the delivery-versus-payment system lower cost and bring down rates?

A: It can lower cost. It can also bring down rates. For one, banks have settlement lines, and those lines are through accommodation of trades. If you hold back, the efficiency of fund utilization is hampered because certain transactions can suffer because certain lines are not available. One bank that will be able to lend to another at a cheaper rate will not be able to do so because the lines are clogged. So if you free up those lines, you will have more efficiency in the exchange of money. Also, the delivery system ensures fewer failures. If there are fewer failures, the cost of failure that is passed on is not there.

Q: What does the government think about the current situation where borrowers are apparently not gaining from the low rates?

A: I think it is a central bank issue, but certainly I think the rate cuts and lower interest rates will soon trickle down to the public. The cost of intermediation has not exactly gone down, but it has gone down to the extent that interest rates have fallen at the very least. There really are some benefits that should really pass on to the borrower. Banks are not going to sell. I hear they will just hold on up to March, so the effect of that on interest rates will not happen until March. Recently, the BSP cut reserves in December, but it did not mature until January. So what did we do? We just decided to reject the auction because rates were so high and, true to form, when the new year came in, the maturities came in and rates came down sharply. So the same thing. It's just good we announced our suspension of the one-year, and we're not issuing anything more.

Q: Why do you think banks have not been cutting their rates?

A: The confidence level is not there because of the bad loans created as a result of aggressive lending. Banks are now looking at the credit factor. Unfortunately, maybe some clients are not given the right credit assessment, so the rate given to them is much higher. Also, we do not have a rating agency here that will rate individual corporations, so that there will be a uniform ranking and, therefore, you know what kind or rate you charge them.

Q: Because banks are reluctant to lend to companies, the government benefits in the form of lower rates, right?

A: Well, the government will benefit if banks do not lend to the private sector, but you won't like that because you want banks to lend to the private sector so that economic activity will occur. That is why it is important for banks to be able to lend and, hopefully, the lower interest rates can help these companies recover. If interest rates are high, they will put money in the bank and they would rather close down. But hopefully because interest rates have fallen, which will be favorable for businessmen, then now they may be more profitable because they will be able to pay their loans at a lower rate. Of course, the cut in interest rates will not automatically benefit them because there are loan requirements. Sometimes it gets re-priced every six months, so if it occurs at the time the rates are cut, then okay.

Q: Have you changed your assumptions this year regarding the government's borrowing cost?

A: Not yet because we have not been formally informed. But we believe this year will be lower than last year. Last year, the cost of our (91-day T-bill) was 8.5 percent; 9 percent to be more conservative. I think with inflation rate being one percent lower this year, we should see average T-bill rates to be close to 8.5 percent rather than 10 to 11 percent. The average of cost of borrowing through bonds, I think, was assumed to be 15 percent, but we achieved 13 percent last year.

I wouldn't want to be overly optimistic, but a rate at least a half-percent lower than last year is good enough for us. We don't want to push for lower than that because you don't know when US interest rates will start moving up and when the BSP will also start to follow suit. Of course, with inflation seen at a low of 5 to 6 percent, then the BSP should maintain rates at the current level. But again, we should now be very cognizant of the fact that the BSP has decided to adopt an inflation-targeting scenario, so they will be very proactive and just react on certain inflation rate threats.

Q: What are the savings from the drop in interest rates?

A: The total debt stock is P2.3 trillion. Assuming it's a one-percent drop across all tenors, then it's about P2.3 billion. But then, I want to restudy it because the P2.3 billion in savings are true if you are a floater. But if they are in fixed-rate like bonds, then the interest rates decline will have no impact. So the savings will only be for borrowings done this year.

Q: What will cause interest rates to move up this year?

A: Brisk economic activity can cause rates to move up. The US Federal Reserve Board's action could push rates up, as well as anything that causes inflationary moves and economic activity, if it goes beyond certain levels and causes demand to rise beyond productivity. Of course, world prices also affect inflation because of imports like oil prices, when they move up, although not too big an impact, but it does have a contribution. I think the biggest contributor will be the state of the domestic economy, the extent of economic activity.

Q: The political climate could also have a bearing?

A: Yes. During (former President Joseph) Estrada's time, inflation was low, but rates were moving up because everyone wanted to hold on to their cash. I think Filipinos who profess to love their country should only exert their best to help the current administration.

Q: Do you see the causes that would push rates up happening this year?

A: No, I think economic activity will remain about the same as last year at a 3.3-percent growth. We're looking at a higher growth number this year propelled by the fact that it's going to have an effect on the second half of the year. So even if this happens in the second half of the year I think we can still grow without inflationary pressure if the infrastructure is there for growth and the demand is addressed by the supply. Of course, the only thing we cannot change is the political aspect where always the rumor mills have a way of aggravating the situation where there is none. But my own sense is that should not be an issue. I think we're on better political footing now than in the last two years during the Estrada times when there were a lot more upheavals.

Q: What are the reforms you plan to undertake? We hear you are currently moving to accredit government securities-eligible dealers?

A: We are looking to accredit. Of course, we have been delaying that because consultations are being made with them. What we want to do is to have a dealership network that will really be market makers, that will really be distributors of bonds, so the public will be holders of bonds. We want to ensure that they are committed to the auction process, and they're committed to secondary market development rather than really buying the bonds and keeping it on their books.

Q: What are some of the guidelines for accreditation?

A: That they are able to report to us actual volumes of outright sales, not buy backs, which I guess the central bank hopefully will take out. Of course, it's not good to see buy backs. It's a practice. It's something that should not be. Buy backs, if these are done under a repurchase, should be good for the market because these allow liquidity for instruments. It should not be really illegal, except the law requires by definition a deposit substitute to be subject to reserve requirements and a lot more. The reason why banks are hiding that is because of the large cost involved, although the transaction itself is beneficial to the government really. If you allow the market to trade and allow it to be done on a recourse basis, you are liquefying banks that need liquidity and, hopefully, it doesn't cause rates to rise because you're able to trade it. Where as now, if you do (repurchase agreements), you are slapped reserve requirements and the cost goes up and the cost eventually will find its way to the government.

Q: Do you support this move to formalize buy-back or repurchase agreements?

A: I support the move to allow repurchase agreements without reserve requirements or other forms of taxation because, in the end, this will be beneficial to the government and secondary trading activities. They may want to call it by any other name, but I would support a move that should, in fact, allow repos to be done without those taxes or reserves. If the only way to do it is by another instrument with a similar nature, then that's fine. It becomes above board. The risks are very much seen, and it is good for the regulator partly because they can see if a bank is taking too much interest rate risks and whether there is exposure that is being created because of certain transactions like this. For the government, because it becomes an instrument with long term-maturities and becomes liquid, then the rates can really go down. The reason why you have a very high rate is because you pay a premium for holding a bond long; you cannot really liquefy. But if you can liquefy, the rates will fall.

Q: How much will the government borrow this year?

A: We are looking to borrow—net value after all the rollovers—P130 billion.

Invest in T-bills, time deposits, banks tell clients

From page C1

rates. We have daily market quotes for 30 days, 60 days, 90 days and beyond up to one year. Currently, a 30-day placement earns an interest of 7.25 percent per year.

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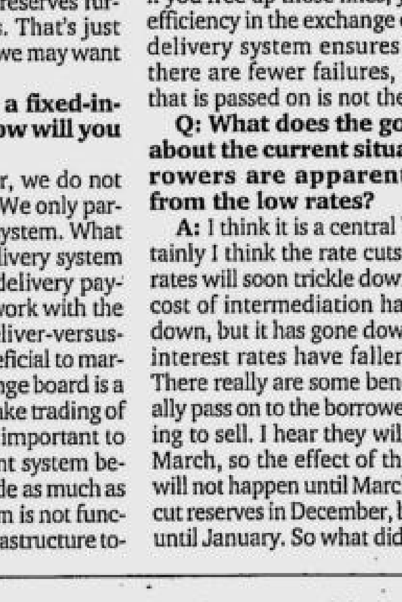
Ador A. Abrogena
Banco de Oro
SVP and head of trust banking group



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Agnes Cruz
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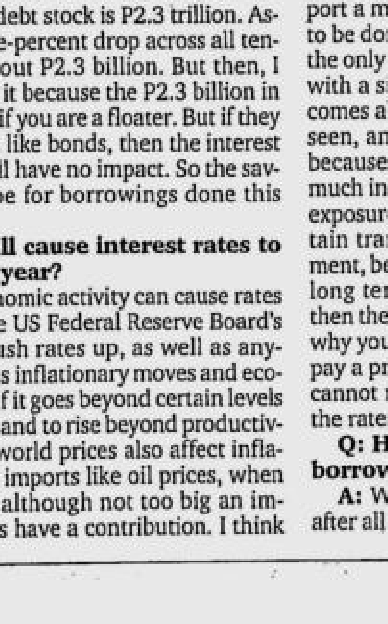

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The 'BREAK NA TAYO' issue

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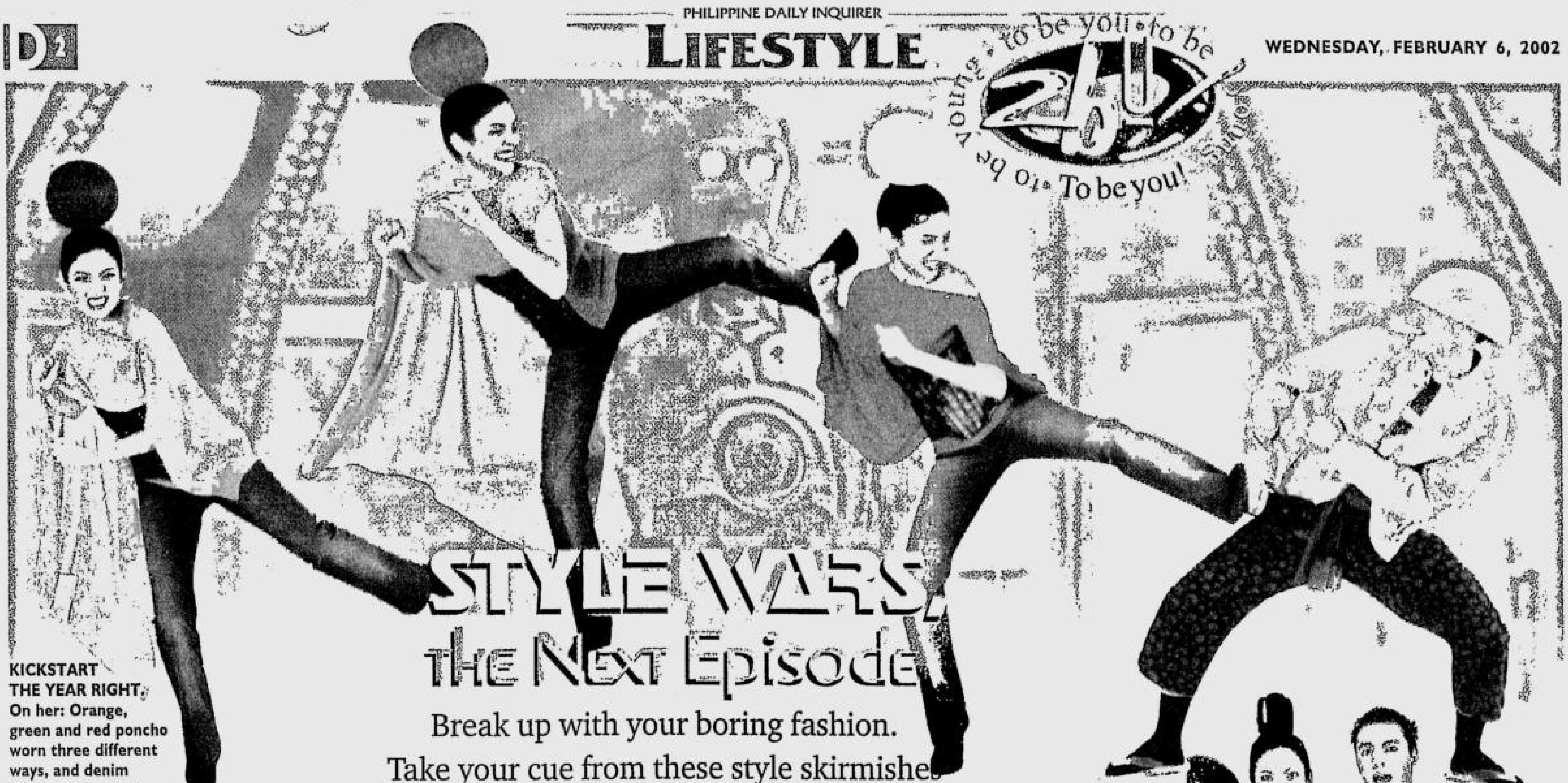

STYLE WARS, the Next Episode

Break up with your boring fashion.
Take your cue from these style skirmishes

KICKSTART THE YEAR RIGHT. On her: Orange, green and red poncho worn three different ways, and denim corset with gold dye by Wink Rhett Eala, with stores at Rockwell and Glorietta. Jeans by HerBench, lamp as headgear by Sari-Sari Store, Rockwell. On him: Lamp headgear and buttons from Sari-Sari, "7" shirt from United Colors of Benetton-Glorietta, skull printed capri pants and orange jacket by Wink Rhett Eala, slippers by Bench, camouflage sash from Baguio *ukay-ukay* (stylist's own)

THE ONE. On her: Black turtle neck and denim pants by HerBench, fuchsia corset and fancy jewel belt by Wink Rhett Eala. On him: "1" shirt by Bench, printed jacket with vintage fabric by Rajo Laurel from "01" collection (tel. 895-6426) and faded Levi's 501 jeans

By Tim Yap
Photos by Chito Vecina

Breaking up is indeed hard to do. But if you are sick and tired with brand boredom and fashion fidelity, or are simply incompatible in style with your style brand, then by all means, say goodbye to victim-hood.

Win the war by taking the extra step out of your comfort zone, indulging in your instincts and going with colors and shapes to match your mood. Play, have fun, do something outrageous. The best gift of separation is your newfound freedom. Blessed are the free, for they shall enjoy the earth.

Here at 2bU!, we got HerBench supermodel Amanda Griffin paired with Tatler marketing executive Ryan Robles to demonstrate that clothes are indeed meant for the free. Belts can be made into sashes, lamps can be worn as hats, scarves can be belts, men can wear stuff for women and vice versa.

At Henri Calayag's H salon, Rusty Ledesma and Richelle Aguila weaved their H magic on our models. INQUIRER photographer Chito Vecina captured our fashion whims as our godparents from Bench, United Colors of Benetton, Sari-Sari Store, Milkwear, Levi's and Wink waved their wands. Designers Rhatt Eala, Rajo Laurel, Warp and Ignacio Loyola indulged us with their creations. Closets were stormed (Celine Lopez's and my own) and flea markets raided, and voila! Episode Two begins.

Let the war begin.

OBI-ONE-KENOBI. Pink undershirt, denim miniskirt and plastic slippers, all from HerBench. Obi made to order from Michele Sison couture (633-0744 or 52). On him: Embroidered orange shirt from Wink for men, ruffled rose sash from Milkwear, jeans from United Colors of Benetton, and shoes, Nike Air woven

MASTER AND SERVANT. Curtain couture dress made to order by Ignacio Loyola (0917-665-4732), striped shirt from HerBench, diamond belt as headgear from Wink Rhett Eala. On him: Baby blue shirt with embroidery from Bench, red and white shirt jacket for women by Milkwear-Rockwell Power Plant and dark denim by Sari-Sari Store. Bohemian bag from United Colors of Benetton

QUEEN FOR A DAY. Denim gown with giant zipper by Ignacio Loyola, fuchsia shirt and handbag by HerBench

SKYWALK WITH THIS. Shades from Sari-Sari, zebra striped necktie by Milkwear, belt by Dries Van Noten at Joyce Hong Kong, maroon capri jeans by Benetton and long jacket by Rajo Laurel (stylist's own)

Mini Job Fair AT Onstage GREENBELT

Nothing would afford us more pleasure than to bring you the first run of Mini Job Fair this year. The INQUIRER'S JOB MARKET carries on to meet the needs of our advertisers in picking the right professionals among the bunch.

On February 18 to 19, 2002, JOB MARKET will hold a Mini Job Fair at the city's latest venue in Greenbelt, Makati — Onstage.

The mini job fair offers packages which we hope you will then consider to join hands with us.

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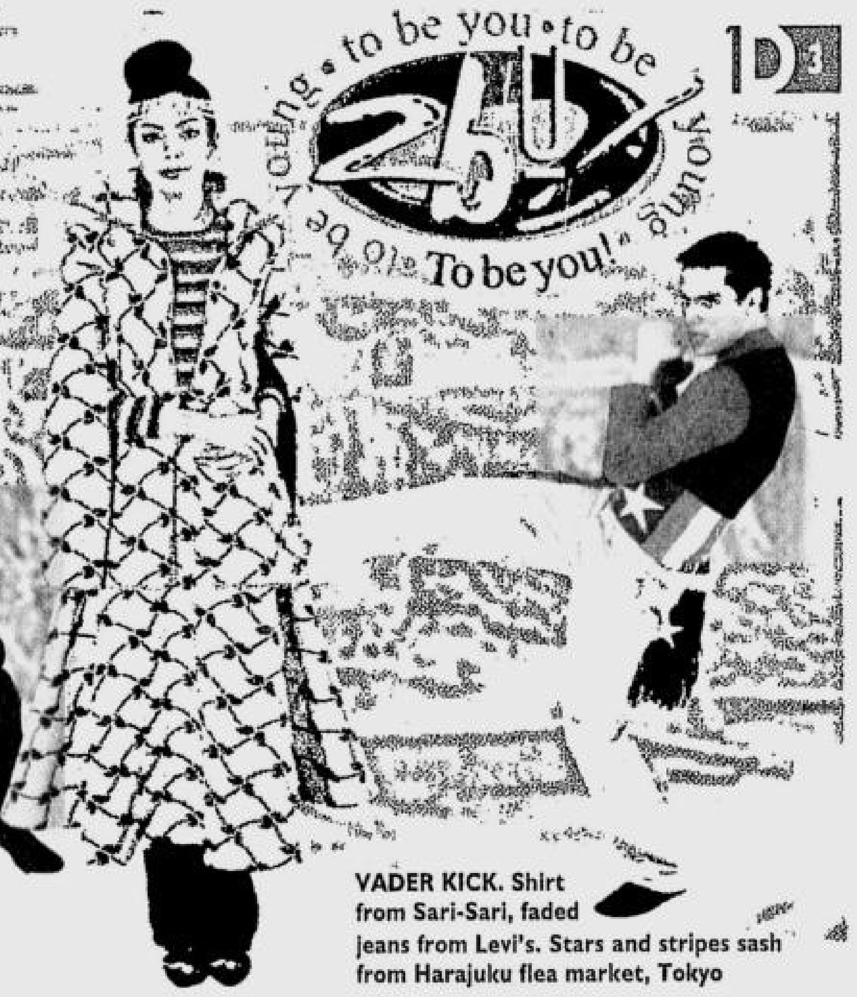
STYLE WARS, the Next Episode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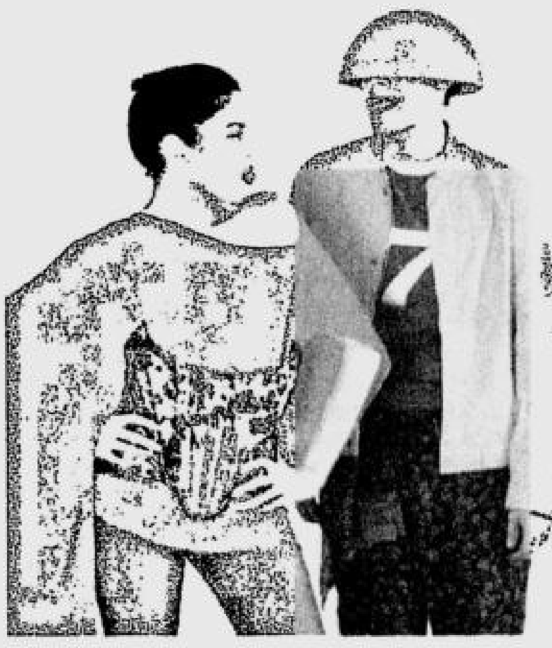
To be you!

VADER KICK. Shirt from Sari-Sari, faded jeans from Levi's. Stars and stripes sash from Harajuku flea market, Tokyo

VICTORY'S COURT. White shirt and skirt by Tina Daniac (tel. 0917-537-9193) Japanese kimono and vintage Spanish shawl from Celine Lopez's closet

HAN SOLO GOES LOCO. Deconstructed jacket with vintage fabric from Rajo Laurel "01" collection, ruffled shirt by Warp, orange sash from Sari-Sari, vintage Chinois tassles from the Peking opera, flea market find from Shanghai (stylist's own). Faded 501 jeans from Levi's



Henri Calayag's H Salon is located at 3/F Rustan's Makati

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DIGITAL COMPOSITION BY ERNIE SAMBO / ALBERT RODRIGUEZ
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Per DTI-NCR Permit # A1-0060 , series of 2002

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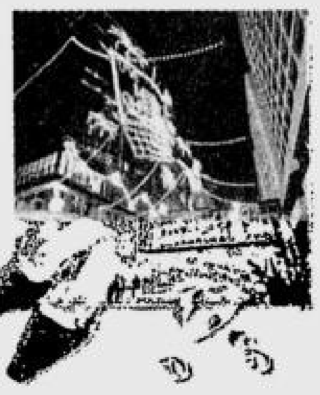

A party that spans the city!

We're opening the doors on Asia's biggest party with attractions and cultural events all over Hong Kong. From the Bun Festival on Cheung Chau island to the International Dragon Boat Festival in Sha Tin, there is something for every age and interest. Age old religious festivals, space-age lighting displays, you name it, you'll find it in the City of Life. And if that's not enough for you, we've added 5 new Major Events during the festival and holiday season, plus year-round cultural, sporting and heritage activities.

Hong Kong Lights Up!

We're turning up the lights on Victoria Harbour. In the weeks leading up to Chinese New Year (26 Jan–26 Feb), we're transforming the harbour and surrounding areas with dazzling lighting displays and magical seasonal decorations. While the incredible 'Rhythm of Light—Aqua Fantasia' music and light show at Centenary Garden in Tsim Sha Tsui East will leave you breathless.

A parade that covers the globe.

No city ushers in Chinese New Year quite like Hong Kong. We'll be welcoming the Year of the Horse on 12 February 2002 with the 2002 Cathay Pacific International Chinese New Year Parade & Fiesta —an eye-catching, ear-pounding, wondrous array of floats and exciting performers. And on the third day of the New Year, world-class horse racing will have you cheering for your favourites at the Sha Tin race course. So gallop into the Year of the Horse with us.

Saying it with flowers.

Talk about a city coming into bloom. From 4–17 March 2002, we'll be hosting the Hong Kong Flower Extravaganza, when the world's finest florists and horticulturalists will show their talents with floral displays and innovative landscape designs all over the city. And with spring in the air, it's a great time to explore Hong Kong's natural treasures with a nature walk or a guided countryside tour.

Everything must go!

There's nowhere quite like this shopper's paradise. During the Mega Hong Kong Sale, from June to August 2002, you'll enjoy sizzling savings as retailers and malls across Hong Kong offer great deals and special promotions. Whether you're looking for designer Italian outfits, antique jewellery or the latest electronic gadget, this is the time to shop till you drop.

Dance to the beat.

You'll be dancing in the streets (and everywhere else) during the City of Life Street Carnival. Catch the jitterbug fever with non-stop action from local and international musicians, street performers and enough entertainment to keep the whole family moving and grooving. It's all set to be the street party of the year, come December 2002.

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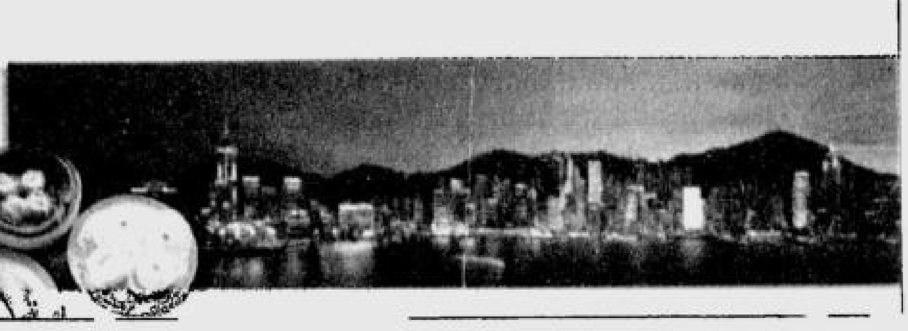


Soundtrack for a broken relationship

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

WHEN I was in high school, I had this silly Valentine tradition wherein I would bring out all the albums I bought that year, list down what my friend Andrea and I considered as "sentimental songs," and make a kick-ass Valentine mix tape.

Songs like Veruca Salt's "Loneliness Is Worse" and Our Lady Peace's "4AM" were among those that found their way into my own 60-minute top hits that would play endlessly on the car radio until the tape was practically in shreds. What made my selections stand out was that they were *real*. While my friends were drooling over the latest Backstreet Boys release, Andrea and I were swooning over Super Deluxe's "Years Ago."

We declared that all the rock songs we chose actually told a story, actually went past all the "I will love you forever, I promise!" proclamations of other bands, and gave the nitty-gritty details on relationships and the rocky roads they took. Imagine a 13-year-old saying that. It makes me laugh now.

I've come a long way since my mix-tape days. All those songs I loved in high school, all those emotions related to breakups and the loss of someone finally mean something to me.

You can tell the whole world how wonderfully honest a song is and say you feel the lyricist's pain without experiencing that pain. You can say you relate to an artist's masterpiece when in reality you only *think* you do. The funny thing is, after listening to these songs all these years, I only really understood what they meant the past few months.

The author requests that the reader not make fun of her obsession with track listings

When you break up with someone, at first it feels like you are in an emotional roller coaster with no one at the brakes. I remember when my friend Janice was dumped—endless phone calls at night with proclamations of "I'm so over him!" followed by a crying session and declarations that "she wasn't good enough" and she missed him. We'd go shopping and she would seem like the happiest girl in the world. Afterward, she would sink into a hole so deep, she wouldn't talk to anyone. Worse, she couldn't listen to music.

I thought it was pathetic and I thought what she was going through was completely exaggerated. But I got my karma. I got dumped, too. I thought of the emotional roller coaster ride I had to endure and I looked at my CD collection. Bingo! My first successful CD mix, which I christened "The Titanic Sank... So What?" was born.

The linear notes read: "'The Titanic Sank...So What?' is a compilation of songs that resemble the roller coaster ride of a breakup. Strap on your seatbelts and enjoy the ride—it's a long, long way to go before someone hits the brakes."

Having been ordered by Pam Pastor the chief to write about breakup songs, here I am sharing the track listing with you.

- **"How's It Going to Be" by Third Eye Blind.** I got the acoustic version off the Net. One of my favorite 3eb songs, this poses the eternal question: Do I break up with him/her or not?
- **"August in Bethany" by The Juliana Theory**. My friend Miggy told me to download this song a long time ago. A semi-acoustic number, it assumes the point of view of the dumper, with lyrics like "I'd rather rest forever in your arms/I'd rather stay here than go/ But I know that I should leave."
- **"The Brilliant Dance" by Dashboard Confessional.** I absolutely love this song. It makes the entire situation clear and you feel absolutely useless and weak ("And breathing is a foreign task/and thinking's just too much to ask/and you're measuring your minutes by a clock that's blinking eights").
- **"Lost in You" by Ash.** Probably the top favorite slow song of Ash fans, it is one of the songs that play in your head during those hellish sleepless nights ("Dying to call you/But it is late at night/And you're far away/ But you are always in my mind").
- **"Farther Down" by Matthew Sweet.** "Farther down, I'm desperate for you /When you never have to know." Need I say more?
- **"What I Didn't Know" by Atheneum.** This is when you start to feel sort of happy, when you feel there's still some hope left in your relationship ("I hope my absence makes you well/ What I didn't know/ Is I was killing you/ I said a lot of things/ That I didn't mean to/ But I am over now/ And I am sorry too/ So I can wait a while/ 'Til it brings me back to you").
- **"Shiver" by Coldplay.** Probably the most pathetic song in the album, it is about wanting to change, to be the person he/she wants you to be, to be there for the other in times of need.
- **"Here's to the Night" by Eve 6.** This is about moving on and seeing tomorrow as a new day while still holding on to the past. Hey, didn't I say it's a roller coaster ride?!
- **"I'll Be" (acoustic) by Edwin McCain.** It's as if you're doing a solo dance of courtship with this song—making empty promises to be better when you're older (preferably when you grow older with your ex-significant other).
- **"3 A.M." (piano acoustic) by Matchbox Twenty.** This is when you are about to move on and start to see the weirdness in the other.
- **"Linger" by the Cranberries.** Really, must I elaborate?
- **"Letters to You" by Finch.** A good punk rock song. ("Do you notice I'm gone?/ I want you to know that/ I miss you/ I miss you so")
- **"Glycerine" (acoustic) by Bush.** Its being acoustic just adds to the pain (I can almost see my anti-Bush friends roll their eyes), especially with lyrics like "I need you more/When we wanted us less/ Could not kiss/Just regress." It hints that you are partly at fault by not really giving much away (hey, we got a thing called pride, right?!) and with your fear of commitment.
- **"Angel" (acoustic) by Sarah McLachlan.** If you want to add to the drama of whatever you're going through, put this in your own album. (You have got to make your ex look good somehow or somewhere. Where else will he look any good, anyway?)
- **"Crawl" by This Way.** This one's about crawling out of that hole you are in, finally learning new things about yourself and other people ("Faces I remember/I still see/And places in a memory/Hold on to me/And I can't wait to crawl out of my shell").
- **"I Can't Be With You" by the Cranberries.** One of my rules in making mix albums (okay, didn't I just brief you earlier about my deep obsession with making these things?!), is not to put two songs by one artist in one collection. But this has many exceptions. This song finally makes you admit the need to move on, while not denying that he will always be a part of you.
- **"Today" by The Smashing Pumpkins.** Can you say "I'm moving on with my life?" Billy Corgan says, "Today is the Greatest Day I've Ever Known."
- **"Motorcycle Drive By" by Third Eye Blind.** I started the album with one of my favorite bands and ended it with the same band. From their first album, this song has "I'm moving on" written all over it. Think screaming "And this will be the last time/We'll be friends again/ I'll get over you/And you'll wonder/ Who I am," before softly proclaiming "I've never been so alone/And I've never been so alive."

Now there. Wasn't that roller-coaster ride fun?

Other songs you might want to listen to (in case my playlist does not do anything for you):

- "I Will Survive" by Gloria Gaynor
- "Halloween" by Dave Matthews Band
- "Break Your Heart" by Barenaked Ladies
- "Pagkakamali" and "Alright Without You" by Mojofly
- "Loneliness is Worse" by Veruca Salt
- "Dilate" by Ani Difranco
- "Hiram" by Twisted Halo
- "Best I Ever Had" by Vertical Horizon
- "I Never Loved You Anyway" by The Corrs
- "Hole in My Soul" by Aerosmith
- "Unang Araw" by Sugarfree
- "Dammit" by Blink 182
- "You Were Mine" by The Dixie Chicks
- "Foolish Games" by Jewel
- "Hello Pain" by Pin-up Girls
- "I Hate Myself for Loving You" by Joan Jett and the Blackhearts
- "Moment of Weakness" by Bif Naked
- "Ex-girlfriend" by No Doubt
- "Broken Promise Ring" by The *Ataris
- "Someday We'll Know" by New Radicals
- "Bituwin" by The Itchyworms!
- "Song for the Dumped" by Ben Folds Five
- "Cocoboy Goodnight" by Fatal Posporos
- "You Oughta Know" by Alanis Morissette
- "Kisapmata," "Shattered Like" and "Never Been Better" by RiverMaya
- "Jane Doe" by Alicia Keys
- "There You Go" by Pink
- "Sino sa Atin?" by the Eraserheads

The most heartbreaking breakup scenes

By Jules Alcantara
2bU! Correspondent

BREAKING up. Saying goodbye. Letting go.

Not exactly wonderful topics, right? Especially when you're still nursing a broken heart or when you and your ex-partner did not exactly end on a good note. It does not exactly help either when one of you made a scene (highly likely) during this particularly painful moment. These "scenes" make you realize that you are actually equipped with selective memory. But before you jump the gun and delete these memories for all eternity, let's remember these moments in cinema and television that made our tears fall unabashedly or made us cringe in horror and think, "That's what happened to me!"

'Parting is such sweet sorrow,' the Bard says. And such a sodden affair

"Friends" (that episode where Ross and Rachel break up)

After closely following the highs and lows of Ross' major crush on Rachel, to jumping in delight upon seeing them getting together to the tune of "With or Without You," it was an absolute heartbreak to see them break up. That scene belongs to the top five if ever there is such a list made. Seasons have passed and up to this very day, fans are still hoping for them to get back together. Well, I know I am.

Moral of the story: Being on a break is not an excuse to have a one-night stand.

"Somewhere in Time"

First saw this when I was way too young to be watching romantic movies. Up until I was about 10 years old, I had a daily ritual. I would close my eyes for five minutes every sunset and wait to be transported in time to meet my future boyfriend. When I complained to my mom that it wasn't happening, she told me to wait till I got older. Wise woman, my mother! For the record, I have discontinued this ritual a long time ago.

Nonetheless, to this very day, it's still pure horror to see Elise Mckenna (Jane Seymour) screaming for Richard (Christopher Reeves) as he is literally being taken away from her by time. This was one breakup you can honestly blame on lack of time or the time space continuum—whatever that is.

Moral of the story: Time is not on your side.

"Always"

Pete (Richard Dreyfuss) says his goodbyes from the after life to a grieving Dorinda (Holly Hunter) in that scene right after she saves fire fighters in a bush fire. She turns off the engine of her airplane and stops mid-air in the middle of a clear blue starry night. As if in a dream, he tells her what he should have told her while he was still alive.

Pete: "I love you.... I should have told you that a long time ago. I know now that the love we hold back is the only pain that follows us here...Brush your hair from your face if you can hear me...So I can see your eyes and I can say goodbye."

The minute she brushed her hair away from her face, my tears fell on cue.

Who would have thought that it would take the underrated Steven Spielberg movie, "Always," to teach some of us the difference between breaking up and letting go?

Moral of the story: Do not procrastinate. Tell him or her. And in this lifetime, please.

"Sex & the City"

Carrie (Sarah Jessica Parker) and Big (Chris Noth) get into an affair while he is unhappily married to Natasha. The wife herself catches Carrie in her own house and in the process the wife loses her teeth while chasing her. Carrie and Big meet up in the emergency room (Carrie brought Natasha to the ER). She talks to him and tells him one of the most commonly used breakup lines (and ironically the most apt for one of the wittiest shows ever written for the tube), "We are so over." Well, at least for now. We fans know that.

Moral of the story: You can never break your teeth even if you're on a wild goose chase for as long as you're wearing Manolo's.

"Casablanca"

"We will always have Paris," Rick (Humphrey Bogart) tells Ilsa (Ingrid Bergman), referring to their enchanting past. The immortal Bogey says the line perfectly—Bergman is, simply, perfect. This is the one scene that has made "Casablanca" one of the best movies of all time. Well, add to this the famous ending where "a beautiful friendship" begins.

Moral of the story: If all else fails, find your "Paris."

"The Bridges of Madison County"

Francesca (Meryl Streep) sees him on the road while she is with her family. Realizing that this is her last chance to give up everything she has to be with Robert (Clint Eastwood), she decides to stay in the car—signaling that she has decided to really say goodbye and forego the one beautiful thing that happened in her life.

By the time the family car moves on and Francesca wipes away the tears in her eyes, my mom and I have run out of tissue that we have to literally split the last piece.

Moral of the story: Even a brief moment of love can last you a lifetime.

"The End of the Affair"

Because of intense love and passion, Sarah (Julianne Moore), a non-believer, turns to God to beg for the life of her lover, Maurice (Ralph Fiennes).

Sarah (on her knees, praying to God): "I'll give him up forever. Just let him live—I'll never see him again."

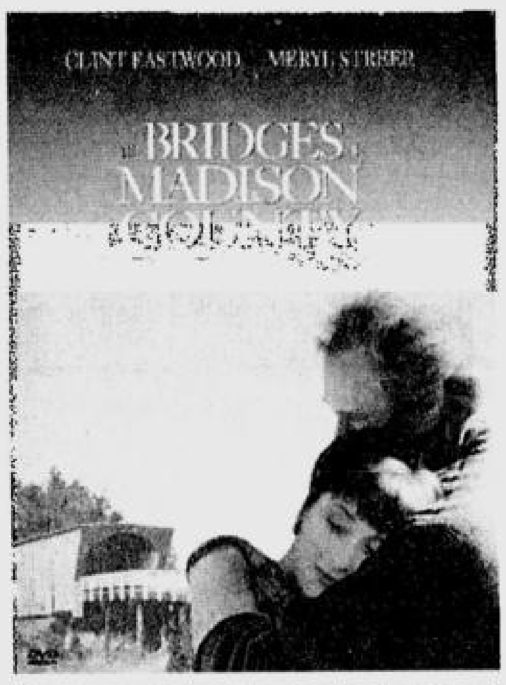
(After a moment, he walks in the room, injured but alive.)

(Sarah's voice over): "If he was alive, then I was dead."

Moments later, she hurriedly dresses up to leave. But before she does, she tells him the most heartbreaking and gut-wrenching breakup line in the history of cinema and of all time: "Love does not end when we don't see each other."

Moral of the story: Don't mess with God.

E-mail the author at jules_alcantara@pinoycentral.com



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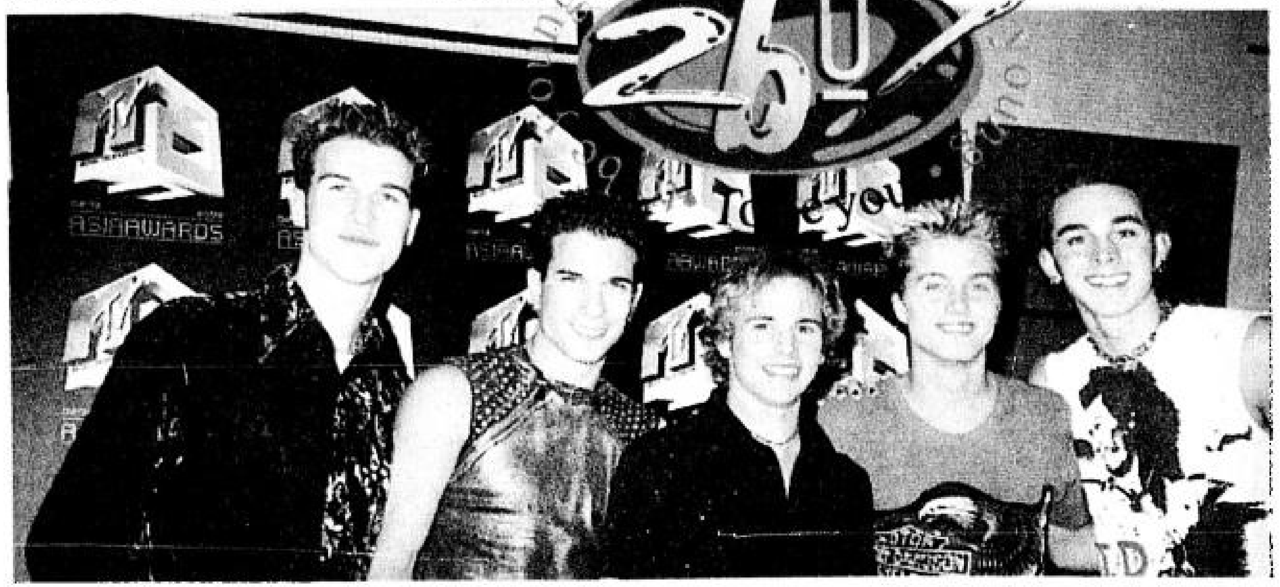


IT'S ONLY NATURAL. Lou Pearlman's newest funky boy band Natural is here in Manila!

What happened on 02-02-2002?

Tim Yap

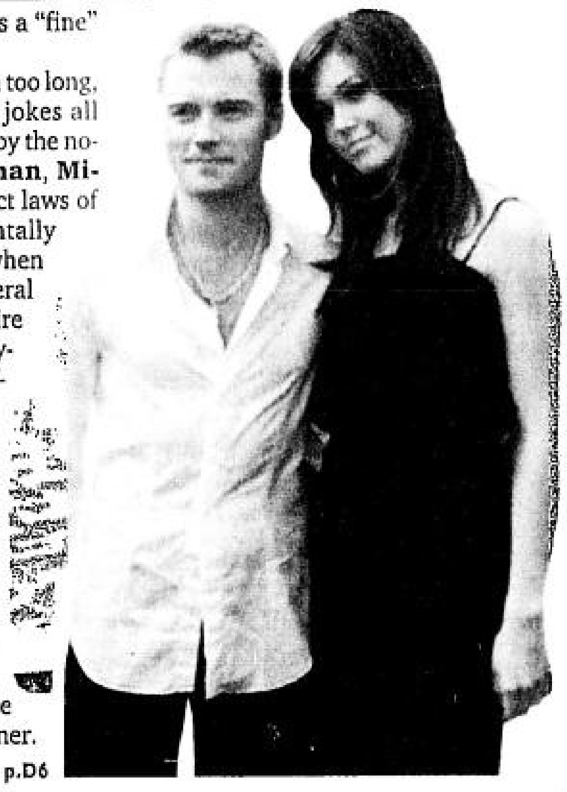
SINGAPORE—The most anticipated gathering of celebrities from the music and glitz biz all over the continent—the first-ever MTV Asia Awards, that's what. Months of drumbeating led to a climax last Saturday at the sunny shores of the southern state of Singapore, which, according to host **Ronan Keating**, is a "fine" city. No pun intended.

Okay, fine. Some found the program too long, the script badly (as in super corny jokes all over) written; others were turned off by the no-shows of certain celebs (**Jackie Chan**, **Michelle Yeoh**) and, of course, the strict laws of this spic-'n'-span city state. I accidentally swallowed the gum I was chewing when our tour guide told us that several policemen in civilian attire are out in the streets trying to spot possible offenders.

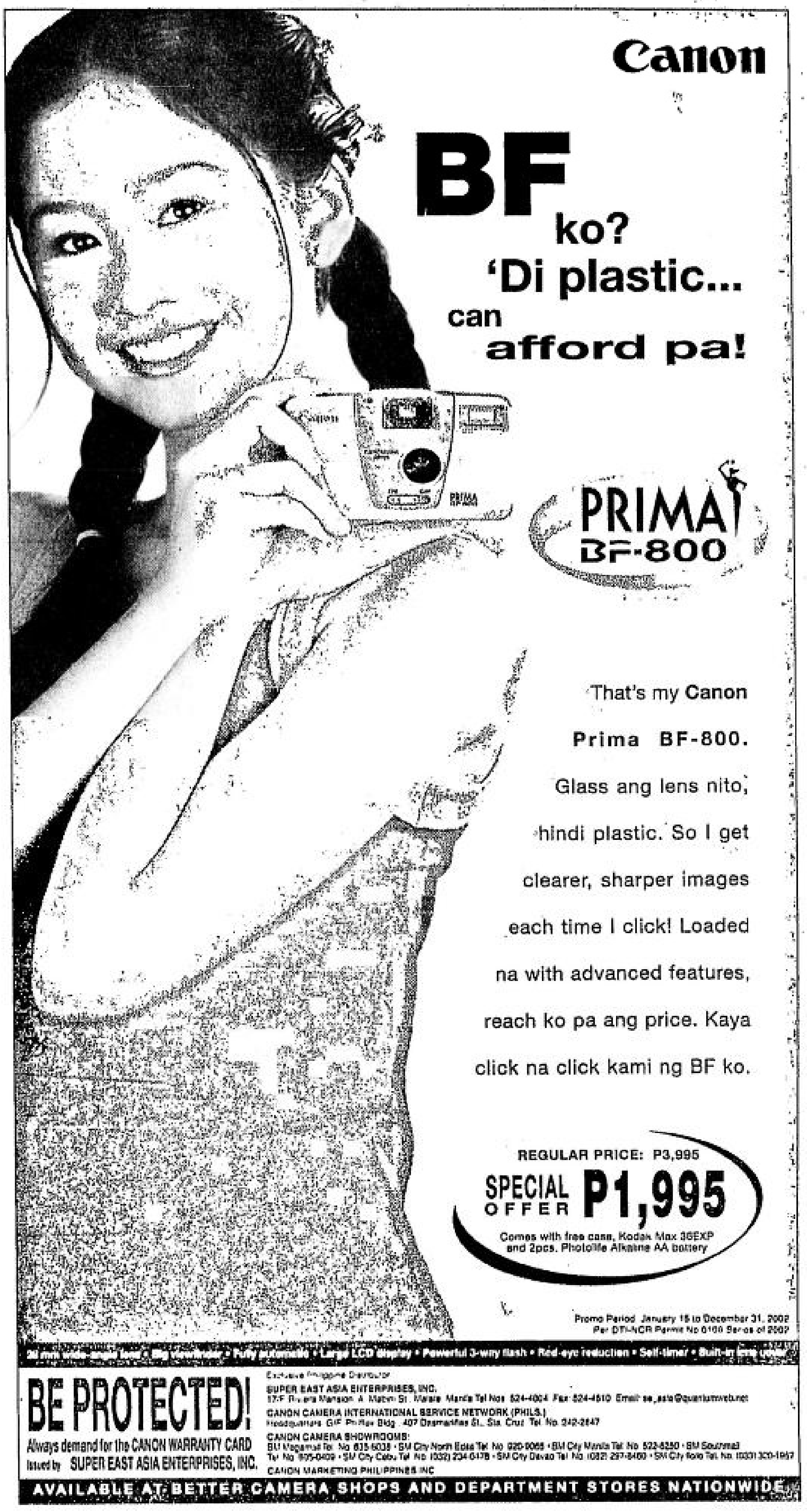
But, hey, let's look at the bright side. The MTV Asia Awards was able to bring together international and Asian talents and was able to showcase them globally via its network of channels—that alone makes them a winner.

WHAT/ p.D6

REGINE RULES! Ms Velasquez's winning moment at the first MTV Asia Awards



WHEN YOU SAY NOTHING. Ronan Keating and Mandy Moore, hosts for the night



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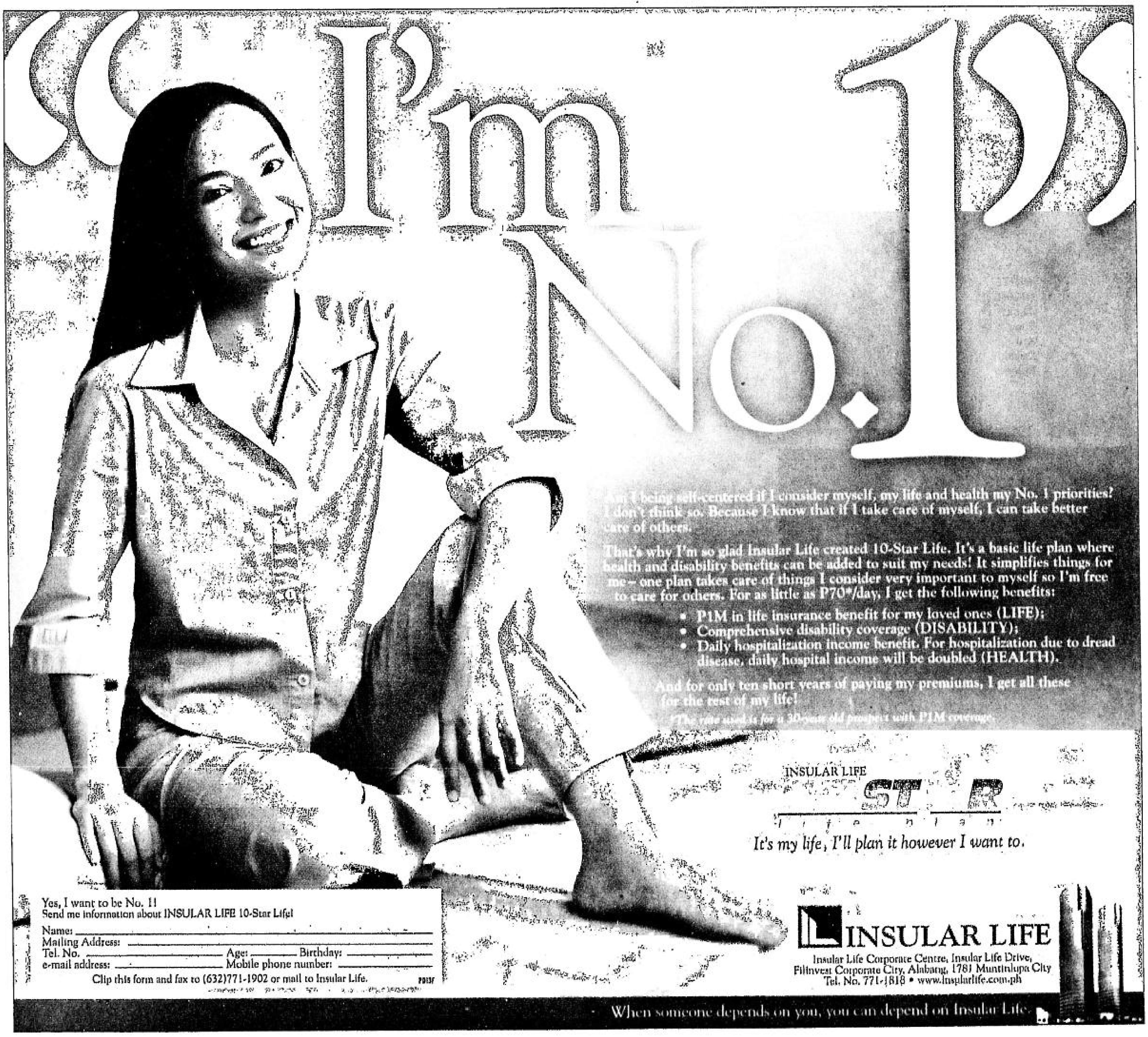

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KAREN Mok prepares to sleep in her nighties.

WWF'S Lita struts her stuff.

M2M'S body-hugging seduction

HUES of Pink with your columnist

What happened on 02-02-2002?

From page D5

I was with my coffee-to-cocktails companion **Celine Lopez** as we played style stalker to the celebrities shuffling from backstage to the press area. Armed with our Kodak instamatics, we entered the Singapore Indoor Stadium with much bravura, in matching "fight" awards outfits as we hopped from the red carpet to the T-shirt and jeans clad photographer's area. One look and you would think we were there to present an award. We told each other, "If we are not going to win anything, might as well vie for star of the night!"

Local style front

With the deluge of stars present for the headcount (so much that we forgot about who didn't go), even that we would not have won. One sleepless night after another, hopping from shopping (with cosmetic queen, NBC's **Tina Tinio**) destinations to pre-awards parties to my bed (at the Stamford Raffles, no less) to the venue, it was one nonstop glam circus for the senses! My seatmate **Sonia**, a reporter for the Straits Times Singapore, believed otherwise, "I expected more—the artists played safe with their fashion. Others wore cheap-looking fabric—they didn't even make the effort."

On the local front, **Regine Velasquez**, who also bagged the local artist award (my prediction in last week's column was right!) and shone in her duet (way to go, our favorite Bulakeña!) with **Mandy Moore**, stayed within the comfort zone of the black dress. **Gary V** looked dapper in his Randy Ortiz tuxedoes paired with tattered jeans, while **Donita Rose** wore Cavalli.

Belinda Panelo scored a coup with her hosting the red-carpet VIP area, but got minus points for the red leather and denim ensemble that was just too ill-fitting for her small frame. "They (stylists) made me wear it, no choice," she said. Later, she bounced back in a chic Rhett Eala poncho ensemble she got at Wink. **Sarah Meier** was all spunk, **KC Montero** wore a leather jacket without a shirt on while new kids on the VJ block **Anna Shier** and **Derek Ramsey** wore matching spring white ensembles.

Uniting the East

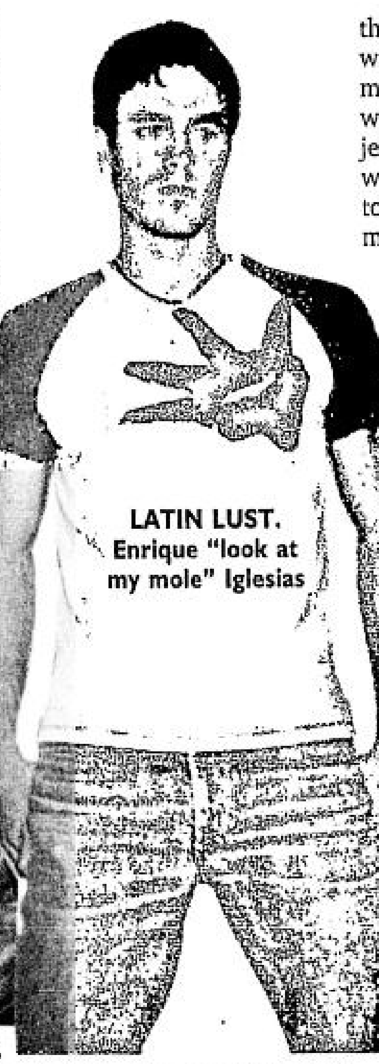
The National Panasonic, Smart Communications and Singapore Tourism Board MTV event was a night of savvy surprises and cocky bouncers. Moore's managers would not let anybody approach her; Keating's bouncers pushed YS editor **Ginggay Joven** at the pre-party; Singapore security stopped MTV's **Charlie Bautista** as she brought out a camera. Bodyguards of **Donatella Versace** (who won as "designer of the year") wouldn't allow anyone to come near the designer—well, maybe it was because she was wearing a diamond the size of a boulder. "No questions about Gianni Versace's death please," the limp-wristed assistant bitchily briefed our very own **Rod Nepomuceno**, who was the moderator at the press interview room.

Aside from the photo room, it was a strictly "no pictures allowed" event. Both **Pink** and **Enrique Iglesias** skipped the press room. Still, we managed to get a few (actually, a lot) shots here and there for you guys to get a better view of the momentous event.

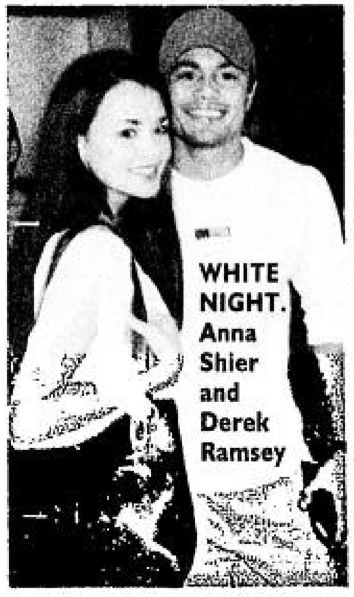
My personal trip highlights include meeting "it" girl **Zhang Ziyi** (I'm melting now) through superstar photographer **Russel Wong**, witnessing Cirque du Soleil's grand production number during the show and the hullabaloo of fun, fun pre and post event parties (to be featured in this space next week) that had a dizzying carousel of celebrities out to P-A-R-T-Y!

More than that, it's seeing Asian artists together getting their due recognition globally in a grand, grand production worthy of their world-class caliber. While it is true that the east, with it's myriad of cultures, languages and varied way of life, would be hard to unite—maybe an event like the MTV Asia Awards is a good step in doing so.

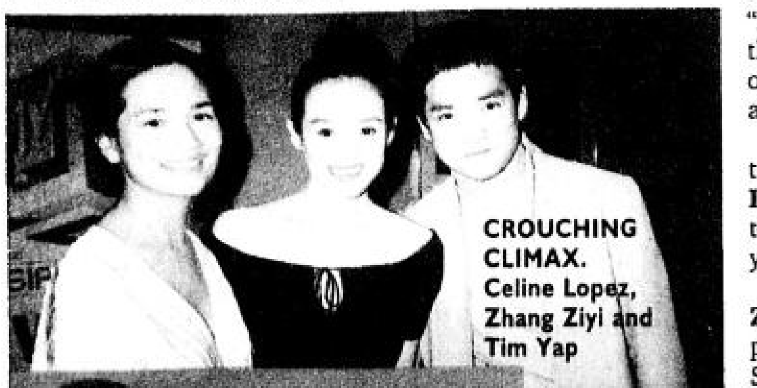
SURREALISTIC Sarah Meier


LATIN LUST. Enrique "look at my mole" Iglesias

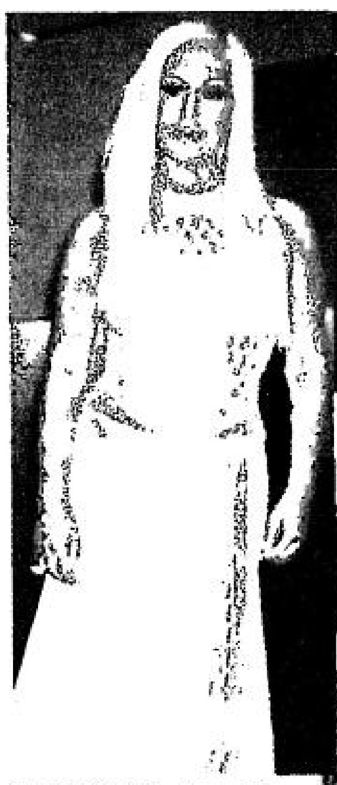
LUCKY WHO? KC goes shirtless.


WHITE NIGHT. Anna Shier and Derek Ramsey

PANASONIC eve for VJ Belinda Panelo and Joseph Lizardo


CROUCHING CLIMAX. Celine Lopez, Zhang Ziyi and Tim Yap

GOD SPELL. Gary V, MTV's Rod Nepomuceno and Donita Rose


GLAM GLAM. Donatella Versace

EAST-WEST LIFE. Charlie Bautista, Yeng Lim, GP Reyes and Tina Tinio with Westlife

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

MOD PIED PIPERS. The Bond girls sizzle.

PRAIRIE look on Chinese singer Na Ying

TOO CLOSE. True Blue boy band

SEVENTEEN'S Maya Calica with Westlife's Nicky Byrne

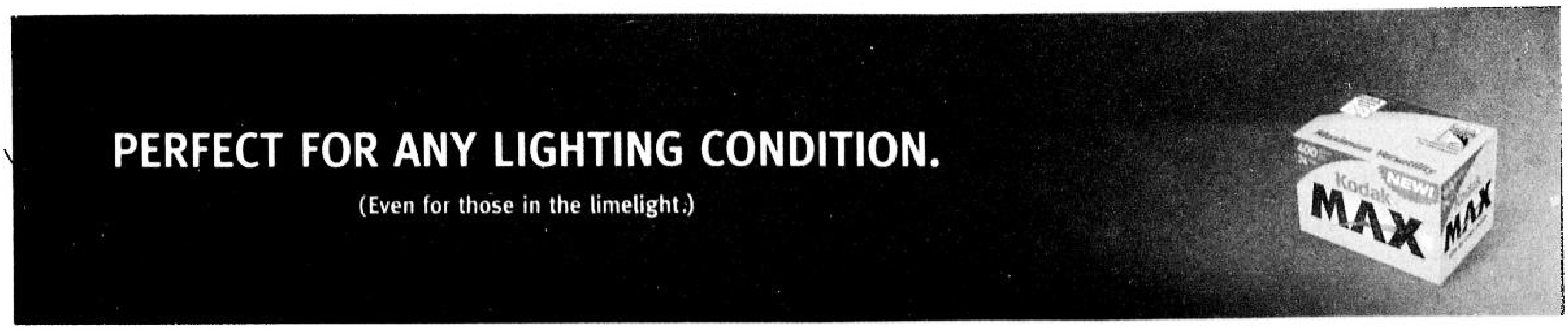
HIGH ROCK. P.O.D. is coming to Manila soon.

GMA look-alike Malaysian awardee in turquoise

INDONESIAN boy band member goes biker chic.

FAMILY bonding with MTV big boss Francis Lumen, Nick and Savannah

NBC'S Marco Borlongan with Vanessa Mayuga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2bU! young, to be young • To be you!

Worst breakup experiences

By Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

I'VE never had a boyfriend, so I've been lucky in never having to re cover from break-up hemorrhage. Sure, I get depressed over guys, too, but after putting my angst-filled melodic rock albums on repeat mode for a few hours, I'm back to being my perky self. In fact, the only time I seriously cried for a week *straight* was back in 5th grade—when I found out that the (then) love of my life, Jon Bon Jovi, had already been married to Dorothea Hurley ever since I was 6.

When 2bU! asked the question, "What was your worst breakup experience?," I felt as though I was swallowing bile while listening to all these painful stories. But in a way, it made me a bit glad (and relieved) that I hadn't yet jumped into the boyfriend-girlfriend bandwagon, only to end up with a severe cardiac arrest.

"I thought everything was fine between me and my [then] boyfriend, but one day he told me he had to find himself, and with me around he couldn't do that. It was so painful because I had to let go of him since I wanted him to be happy. What made it even worse was when he told me he wasn't sure he still loved me, which was one of the reasons he was having a hard time finding himself."—**Michelle, 19, Ateneo de Manila University**

"[It's] having the woman you've fallen in love with telling you she loves you, too... 24 hours before deciding otherwise—breaking up with you and going back to her ex (and your hated enemy.)"—**Carlo, 19, Pratt Institute of New York**

"I thought we would be able to last as a couple through thick and thin. Then one day, she told me she didn't want to settle for a relationship anything less than spectacular. It was the first time we were going through a really bad time together as a pair, and she didn't want any part of it. It was really painful because I had thought she was the kind of person you'd be able to ask for support and strength during the lows of a relationship, but I was wrong."—**Miguel, 18, Ateneo de Manila University**

Being dumped is even worse than landing on top of Payatas

"As I was breaking up with my first boyfriend, he was already texting another girl for a date for the next day. Enough said."—**Anne, 18, University of Asia & the Pacific**

"[Fighting] inside a taxi while in traffic was the worst I ever had. While I was all fired up and mad about my two-timing ex, he suddenly left me swearing inside the taxi when it had to stop for a red traffic light. He was too cowardly to even apologize and left me at the mercy of the taxi driver, who felt sorry for me all the way home."—**Mich, 20, UP Diliman**

"The girl I was with two-timed me. She wanted to break up *na pala* but she didn't want to do the breaking up, so she did unpleasant things on purpose so I'd break up with her. I wanted to talk things over first before breaking up, but she evaded my calls. So I broke up with her. But she tells everyone that she broke up with me!"—**RJ, 19, Ateneo de Manila University**

"My ex chose his fraternity over me. When he broke up with me, he said he wanted to have time for himself first. [Being] the stupid girl that I was, I agreed to part ways and cried buckets. I found out later he was seeing this *jologs* college girl who had a reputation for sleeping around."—**Bix, 20**

"My worst breakup experience was when I got dumped flat out and the next day she was making out with my cousin."—**Brandon, 18, Bentley College**

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique @yahoo.com

How to break up with somebody without really trying

By Jules Alcantara
2bU! Correspondent

BREAKING up. It's not easy, right?

In fact, some silly, old ditty, which by the way should be familiar to everyone since it is on heavy rotation in radio stations wholly dedicated to playing love songs, is right on the money when it says that breaking up is hard to do.

Your role in the dynamics of breaking up may be either the bringer of what is potentially heart-breaking news or the one whose heart, and not to mention mind, will be shattered into pieces. Either way, the fact remains that hurting words will be said and yes, tears will be shed. In many ways, the act of breaking up is *the* world war in the battle of the sexes. The following are some rules of disengagement in the art of breaking up.

Decide. Definitely. Never ever use breaking up as a ploy to assess if s/he loves you. Nothing is worse than being unsure about your feelings for your partner except being undecided about wanting out.

Do not delay. If you have definitely decided on breaking up with your boyfriend/girlfriend, then do it as quickly as possible. Do not wait for time to pass or for the right timing or dig up one more excuse from your bag of tricks to delay what you deem is inevitable. The longer it takes you to act on your decision, the more things will work against you. Consider this—the longer you are together, the higher the risk that your partner will be more attached to you thus you end up hurting him/her even more.

Cut, and cut cleanly. Don't just stop talking to him/her! Do not purposely walk in front of his/her face with a new person holding your hand. Do not wait in the hopes that your partner will take the hint. Do not give your partner more reason to think that you are more than a jerk and a half. You have got to find the guts to say it—out loud or within hearing distance of your partner.

It's easy as 1-2-3 and A-B-C. Just text him it's all over and then disappear from the face of the earth

Do it in person. This is not the time to rely on superior technology to do the job for you. Texting that you want out is lame. E-mail is only acceptable only when s/he lives on the opposite side of the planet. Conning your friends to relay the message to your partner is definitely a no-no. And please, don't break up on the phone. It doesn't make the other person feel less hurt. In fact, its effect is the exact opposite.

Honesty is still the best policy. All this crap about sparing the feelings of your partner, hence "diplomacy" (read: dishonesty), is hogwash. You **are** breaking up with him/her! Just the act of breaking up more than constitutes bamboozling the feelings of your partner. Hello! S/He may think you are a jerk for being blunt by ranting all the details and reasons you want out, but in the final analysis your would-be ex-partner will appreciate your honesty. Look at it this way, if your reason for wanting out is a third party, then you can go pursue the parade without the fear of being found out you have set your sights on someone else.

Close the door. Lock it and throw the key to the endless sea. If you must leave him/her, do it for good. Don't tell him/her that classic breakup open-ended line, "Who knows? Maybe in the future we might still end up with each other," or "Just like the saying, if you love him (or her), set him/her free." Unless you sincerely mean this from the deepest recesses of your soul, then shut up and don't even say a word. People who resort to this personify the concept of condescension. Or they just want to buy a bonus night or date some time in the future when your anger has subsided and longing for them is at an all-time high—this provides him/her a window to be with you—this time with no strings attached.

"It's not you—it's me"(yeah, right!). Oh please, this line is already "*gasgas.*" Survey says that uttering the line or its pathetic facsimile does not in any way make people feel less culpable. Nor does it lessen the pain or make it go away faster. Do yourself a favor—bite your tongue when you feel the urge to use this line. Bite till you bleed.

Finish your business. Settle all issues—leave nothing to chance in the hope that one day your partner will eventually understand (or find out from other people) why you want out. By threshing out all the issues and answering all the questions your partner may have, you have already started the process of healing. Don't walk out of the relationship with things hanging in the air.

Allow your partner to vent out his/her anger. This may manifest during the breakup itself or even months (and years) after, but give him/her that. Your ex needs to walk through the hills and valleys of anger, denial, rejection and finally acceptance.

Work at keeping the friendship. Regardless of the nature of your relationship or its duration, nothing can erase the fact that the person whose heart you are about to break (or has already broken) has been a significant part of your life. When you are old and have no more teeth, you will surely laugh at all the inanities and idiosyncrasies of your youth. It will speak highly of you if the memory of you does the same for your partner. You may have made him/her cry, but at least in the end, you have made him/her smile. If s/he manages to laugh at your expense, then all the better.

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What to give an ex on Valentine's Day

By Lisa M. Sobreviñas
2bU! Correspondent, Ateneo

VALENTINE'S Day is just a week away. Some people have someone to spend it with. Others have nobody special, but many used to have someone to celebrate the day with.

And inevitably, come Valentine's Day, ex-boyfriends, ex-girlfriends and ex-whatever are remembered either lovingly or scornfully. The question is whether or not to give a Valentine gift to one's ex. And if you do, what should it be?

I planned to draw up two lists—what to give your ex if s/he dumped you and what to give your ex if you dumped him/her. But as I asked people for opinions, various issues and questions were raised: Who broke up with whom? Was it a good or bad breakup? Do you want him/her back? Are you giving the gift to a girl or a guy? Were you the dumper or the dumpee? Did you remain friends after the breakup?

The questions were endless that I decided to do away with my lists and just let the people have their say.

"If I have a mean ex, I'll give him a DVD of 'Glitter' or 'The Isle' so that he can barf to death! Ha! Ha Ha! And a bottle of wine with Pennzoil and a 'kid-friendly' *kuno balisong*. He! He! He!"—**Mrs. Dave Matthews, 19**

"*Wala*, forgive and forget *na lang*."—**Getter Robot**

"This is something I saw on the 'Jenny Jones' show *lang... may* girl who had breast implants *tapos pinadala niya 'yung* pic *niya* after the surgery *sa mga* ex *niya, kasi* feeling hot *na* hot *siya*."—**Carlo, 19**

"For my first ex, a CD with the song 'I Never Loved You Anyway.' For my second ex, more suffering, like treating him like a slave—he's more than willing to obey anyway. The gift wrapper will have a black-gothic theme, because I never really celebrate Valentine."—**Superhero Grrrl, 19**

"I'd give myself [with open arms and legs]!)"—**Lipay, 21**

"Sorry, *mukhang wala akong ibibigay, eh. Kuripot ako!*"—**Randy, 19**

"I'll make a book for him titled 'Things I Swear to Do if I Ever Get the Second Chance to Win and Keep the Prize Catch of a Girl I Stupidly Let Go because I'm a Coward Who Can't Commit.' "—**Lees, 19**

"For Valentine, I'd guiltlessly give in to the 'fantabulous' offer made by my friends from a fraternity to smash all his cars and to give his wretchedly vain self a good beating. May his hospital bills rise to all eternity."—**Micah Justine Garcia, 19**

"In the very distant event that I entertain polygamy, I will give my ex a portfolio of the guys I've been with after breaking up with him. It will be accompanied by a Valentine card that says, 'Hallmark card: $2.50. Kodak films: $11. That pathetic look on your face now: priceless.' "—**powerpuff ghurl, 20**

"My answer would be, 'Nothing.' It's not a bitter retort, *ha*. It's just that Valentine's Day is supposed to be a celebration of love, especially romantic love, with your significant other. An ex, however, will be an insignificant (considering the occasion) other, so there's no place/time in the day for him. Even if he has remained a friend, he is not a Valentine."—**Starirai, 23**

"If I have an ex and it was a bad breakup (her fault, too) these are the things I might give her: chocolate-covered dog crap (yum!), a boxful of used diapers, the flu, a website where she could find naked pictures of herself for the whole world to see!"—**drgnkatowl, 20**

"I'll give a simple card with our picture... and probably ask something like, 'Do you remember when this was taken?' "—**Monica, 19**

"I'll give nothing. He's out of my life! I've got nothing to do with him (anymore)."—**Velvet Rope, 17**

"I will tell him to meet me somewhere, *dapat* dark. *Tapos hahalikan ko siya, 'yung halik na su*per *ohmaygawdwhydidiletgoofyou* type of kiss *para magsisi siya!* Mwahaha! Okay *ba*? Hmmm... But really, I will give him something sweet and kind. *Para mas* sweet *'yung* revenge. *Tapos dapat hindi masyadong halata na* bitter, *'di ba? Siguro* lollipop *lang* or something like that *para* at least he knows friends *kami. Bahala na siyang mag-isip, 'di ba? Parang ganu'n lang*. Keep it simple."—**Ley, 20**

"*Depende siguro kung gaano kasama ang pag-*end *ng* relationship *namin. Kung tipong masama, baka padalhan ko sya ng* e-mail. *I-scan ko kunwari* pic-*naming dalawa tapos bababuyin ko siya*. He! He! He! *Ewan. Kung masama, baka* I won't give him anything at all. Greet *ko lang siguro at kumustahin. Pero kung* okay *kami, baka* something *na* we shared together or something I know that he likes. *Hindi babae ha!*"—**Macaraig, 18**

"*Wala akong ibibigay. Tapos na, eh. Ano siya, sinuswerte?*"—**3na, 23**

Most single people with broken relationships wish that Valentine's Day had not been invented. After all, who wants to remember one of the biggest mistakes of their lives (going out with a loser or ending the relationship)? Most answers I got were tinged with bitterness. Few were without regret or anger.

But Valentine's Day is not just for couples. It is for everyone! So I say just enjoy the day and try not to dwell on the past too much. Don't think of your ex too much. You have family and friends to love and celebrate with.

Don't dread Valentine's Day because of your ex. Move on by keeping on living and loving.

Is it time to call it quits?

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

HOW do you know when the romantic road is starting to turn rocky and the ride to forever gets bumpy? In the journey of love, one should be alert to signs that the significant other is no longer eager to continue the trip and is thinking of getting off at the next stop. Here are some warning signs:

- **Alibi overdose.** The liar will never run out of excuses—family obligations, schoolwork, sickness, emergencies. When the excuses become more frequent and numerous, it is time to consider that his priorities have changed.
- **Fewer and lesser.** The phone calls become rare and the time spent together dramatically decreases. Daily routines become weekly. When these things start to happen, it is safe to assume his feelings are also beginning to lose their ardor.
- **Sudden temperature drop.** When he starts touching you like you are a cactus or kissing you like you are his *lola*, then check the fireplace. The raging fire may have become a flickering flame.
- **Always on the defensive.** When he frequently gets into lawyer mode, offering detailed explanations even though you are not asking for them, a titanic guilt may be weighing heavily on his conscience, if he still has one.
- **Instant amnesia.** No-brainer facts that should have been figuratively tattooed in his mind and carved in his heart are now difficult to recall, like answers to a tough Chemistry exam. When he gets your theme song confused with something else or forgets your anniversary, it is time to consider the possibility that you are no longer foremost in his thoughts.

If your significant other starts showing all these signs, even asking if you have "Sana Dalawa Ang Puso Ko" in your composer, it may be time for a showdown so you will know the real score. Better make sure though that you are reading the signs correctly and not simply being paranoid and over-reading things.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com

gtw
girls teens wear
gears, trnds & what hav u's

red * head

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Post breakup beauty tips

Makeover
911
Kinny
Salas

IF you have ever experienced being dumped or been through a very bad breakup, this article is for you. The common scenario is crying till your eyes swell shut and whining to anyone who will listen, holing up in your room à la solitary confinement, no sleeping, letting your body hair grow, smoking, drinking or going wild and dating indiscriminately. Not a pretty picture, isn't it? Believe it or not, there are perks to this type of sorrow. This may be the jumpstart to a makeover you need so turn it all around and let the effects work for you.

Before we get into these perks, I would like to emphasize that crying is good. The rule is to choose your true friends and exhaust the topic of your heartbreak to them. Rant, rave and scream to these chosen people and let all that misery out. By the time you get out into the world and people ask you how you are and what happened, you are genuinely indifferent and sick of talking about it. Once you have reached this state your beautification may start.

ILLUSTRATION JED ESTRADA

Most of us who have undergone a bad breakup have these three things in common:

- A lot of free time. During the relationship, you made your ex the main focus that you now feel lost alone. Take up a hobby or do something you always wanted to do but never had the time before. Now is the time to pamper you.
- More money. You are no longer buying him little tokens of affection or any other junk so the money you have is all yours. Go shopping and reacquaint yourself with your girlfriends by going on girl's night-outs and chitchatting about general girl interests.
- Weight loss. This is truly the best part for most of us. All that grieving leads to appetite loss and that anger burned those calories. Shop for a new wardrobe; wear those clothes you tucked in the back of the closet because they were too slinky and tight. Watch them skim your new figure. Nothing boosts a girl's confidence better than this. The usual amount of pounds shed is 5-10. This may even inspire you to work out with more vigor and your body will become great with no laziness to battle.

Now that you are on the right state of mind, it is time to tackle the beauty issue.

Hair—No drastic haircuts, please, or anything permanent for that matter. Resist the urge to chop it off or perm it. The worst makeovers are usually after breakups. We long to be a new woman or desperately try to forget the past that we take it out on our hair. You may be really over your ex after some time, but get stuck grieving over your ugly hair. Trims and slight changes of style are fine. So is coloring, hot oils and scalp massages. Bring your best friends along so it's more fun.

Skin—Go for facials and play around with new beauty products like masks and creams and pore strips.

Makeup—My favorite. Nothing picks my mood up like new lipstick or skin enhancing foundation and sexy mascara. Try out new techniques and colors. This way you'll be excited to go out.

Hands and feet—Manicures, pedicures, foot spas and paraffin treatments. Pretty feet look great in strappy sandals and you may want to try acrylic (fake) nails in French manicure. Why not try vampy Pamela Anderson nails for a week?

Body—Workout to maintain the new weight and tone everything up. Buy sexy underwear and slinky nighties, if they are your thing. If sadness and anger creeps up on you once in a while, channel them in your tae-bo class. Imagine ex's face as the focal point of your kicks. This beats fatigue easy while making your workout inspiring.

Best advice I can give: List down all the things about the other person that made you unhappy. It makes getting over the grieving so much easier; stay single for a while. Reacquaint yourself with friends and go on group dates. Try a full year of freedom. You'll wonder why you dreaded being single.

For any questions or products you want to road-test, write to Make Over 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 8974805

2BU!—POWER PLANT VALENTINE BLOWOUT

Perfect pair, perfect date

VALENTINE'S Day is almost here again. And while most of us single freaks cringe in anticipation, searching for rocks to hide under, a lot of people are eagerly waiting for the day's arrival in all its mushy glory. You lucky fools.

In our desire to make your Valentine's even happier (like that's possible), 2bU! and the Power Plant mall have come together to bring to you the 2bU!—Power Plant Valentine Blowout.

Joining is a breeze. Just send a picture of you and your loved one and tell us how you plan to make this year's Valentine's memorable. Get as creative as you want.

You may either e-mail us at 2bucontest@inquirer.com.ph or mail to/drop your entries at the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER *Building, corner Chino Roces Avenue and Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati. Deadline of submission is noon of Feb. 10. Winners will be announced on Feb. 13*

The prizes

10 ultra-power date packages

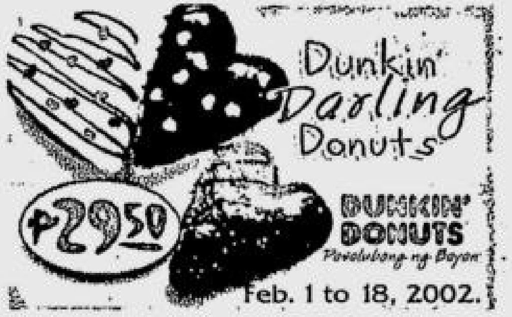
Begin with a special Valentine's dinner at the Area or O Café. Then head to the Power Station for games and excitement. Send balls rolling at the Power Bowl and when you're all pooped, settle back for a nice movie at the Power Plant Cinema.

10 power date packages

Have dinner at Area or O Café and then spend the evening trying to beat each other at different games at the Power Station.

Consolation prizes

Get your adrenaline pumping. Ten Power Station gift certificates will be given away. Don't forget to try the new games. (Good news—they now have a Percussion Freaks machine.)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THE 2BU! BREAKUP SURVEY

Between the dumper and the dumpee

By Pam Pastor

EVERYONE has a love story. Majority even has multiple tales of romance and mush. But what about stories of goodbyes and heartbreak?

2bU! got 50 young people between the ages of 16 and 25 to spill the beans on their breakup experiences.

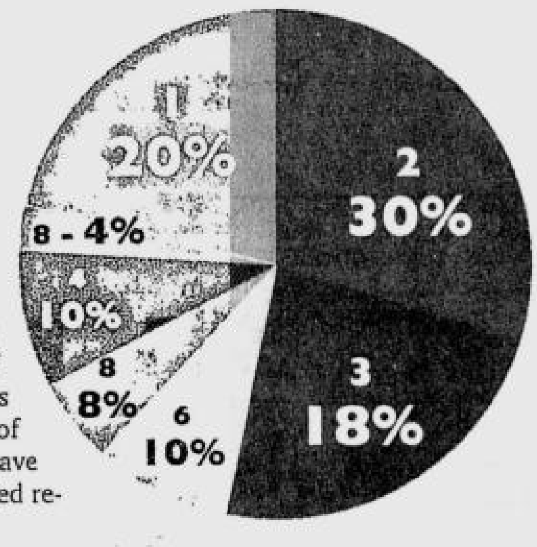
Ten percent of the respondents have had at least one breakup experience. Thirty percent have had two, 18 percent have had three, 10 percent have had four, 8 percent have had five, 10 percent have had six. The most number of breakups was eight—4 percent of the respondents have survived eight failed relationships.

The respondents were asked to choose factors that led to the failure of their relationships. Results show that the top reasons for breakups are boredom (34), incompatibility (32), infidelity (24), lack of time (20), parents (13), big fight (7) and distance (4). A handful of respondents gave specific—and unique—reasons.

Eighteen-year-old Jam broke up with one boyfriend because he realized he was gay. Twenty-one-year-old Lex ended a long-term relationship when her boyfriend decided to join the seminary while 19-year-old "platinum waters'" relationship ended when her boyfriend got another girl pregnant. Other reasons were distance, religion, jealousy and immaturity.

> Breakups cut across generations. If 'dumpees' were to unite, the sight would be one colossal public dump

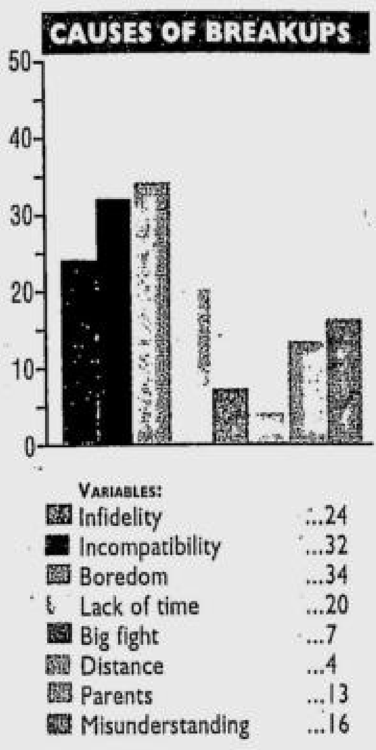
NO. OF BREAKUPS (50 respondents)



Dump

Fifty-two percent of the respondents claimed that they were usually the dumper, 18 percent said they were the "dumpee" most of the time. The rest said that they had experienced both dumping somebody or being dumpee. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents said they were the dumper 100 percent of the time, 20 percent were the dumper 50 percent of the time while 20 percent had never experienced dumping someone. While there may be assumptions that young people would rather be the dumper than the dumpee, very few respondents expressed this sentiment. One girl acknowledged the pain of being dumped, though. Seventeen-year-old Babybear said, "Breaking up is hard to do especially if you're the dumpee."

CAUSES OF BREAKUPS



Surprisingly, though, only 46 percent of those who were dumped said that they wanted to get back at their exes for leaving them. Those who said that they wanted to take revenge chose different options for vengeance. Fifty-two percent said they wanted to make themselves look better than ever and make their ex's regret leaving them. Eight percent said they had considered murder while six percent said they spread rumors about their ex's. None of them thought of snipping his or her ex's hair off.

When it comes to dealing with breakups, majority (56 percent) of the respondents said that it's a very heavy task but can be handled. Twenty-four percent claimed that breaking up is easy while 10 percent say it's difficult. None of them chose the "life-and-sanity-threatening ordeal" option.

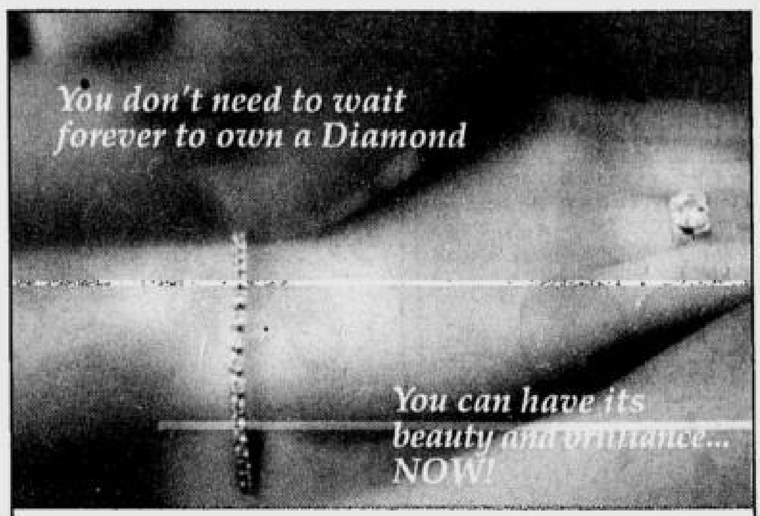
Getting it over

The respondents have different ways of trying to get over their failed relationships. For them, the most therapeutic solution is to go out with friends (28). Other tactics include spending time alone (22), eating a lot (14) immediately finding someone else (13), getting makeovers done (11), spending time with the family (10), shopping (10), going to church (8) and immersing themselves in a self-pity pit (5) and writing (2). Some respondents gave creative answers. One girl claimed she likes to have "the wildest fun" after a relationship is over. She did not elaborate.

In an ideal world of happy perky people, couples who break up immediately become best friends. It seems that this may be a reality for some young people. Thirty percent of the respondents say they've remained friends with all of their exes. Twelve percent have remained friends with half of their ex's and 20 percent did not remain friends with any of them. The other respondents have remained friends with some of their exes.

Some of them recounted their worst breakup experiences. Some border on the comical. Henry, 19, said, "She decided to start going out with girls. I didn't know we had the same preference. He he." Others were downright dangerous—like Jam's experience. "He stalked me for months. He threatened me and my family."

BETWEEN/ p.E4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892-7631/32	687-1218	372-6636	243-8230	850-4574	534-5877	920-8047	860-6921/22	233-7639
812-0472 • 812-0510	638-3028	410-3723 • 410-3724	242-3299 • 242-2399	842-4633 • 842-6887	717-0071 • 717-0072	920-7675	Dan's Marketing Bldg.,	233-7641
Solid Mills Bldg.,	Robinsons Equitable	Cedar Executive Bldg.,	City Plaza Tower,	Citibank-Frabelle Bldg.,	Sunshine Square	Q Plaza,	McArthur Highway	Keppel Centre,
Dela Rosa St.	Tower, ADB Ave.	Timog Ave.	Plaza del Conde St.	Alabang-Zapote Rd.	Plaza	Congressional Ave.	San Fernando	Cebu City

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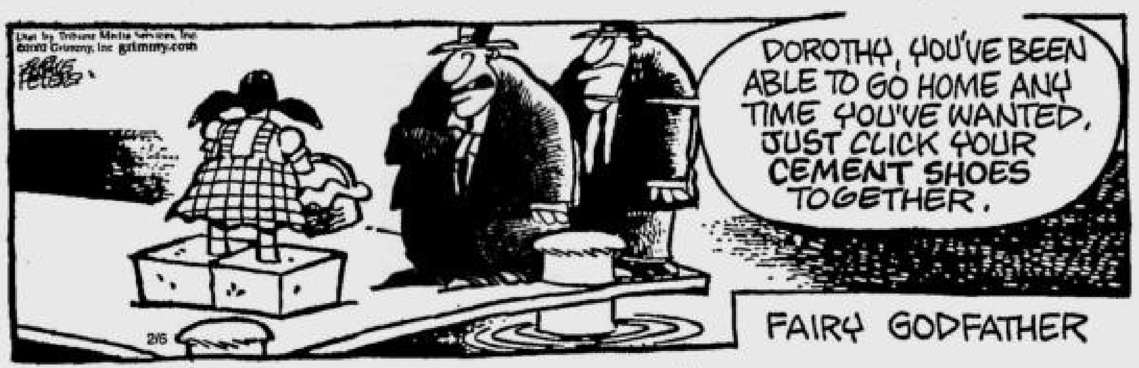
ComicRelief

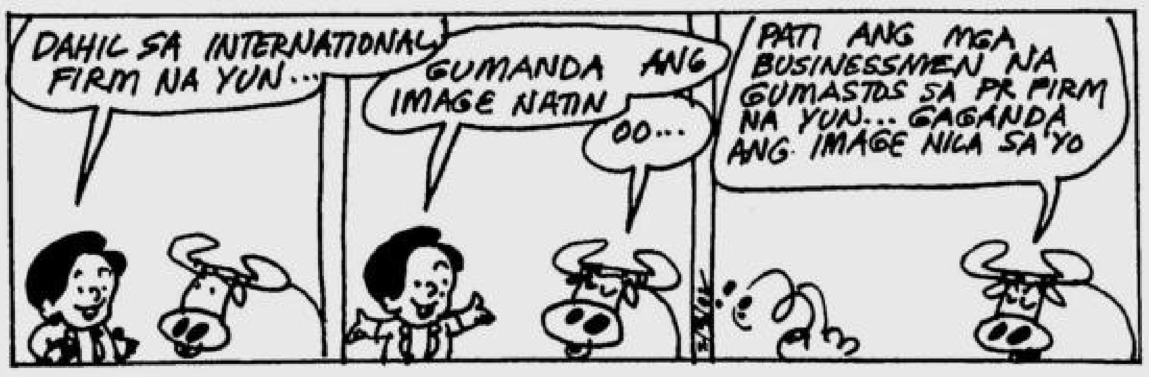
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


DOROTHY, YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO GO HOME ANY TIME YOU'VE WANTED, JUST CLICK YOUR CEMENT SHOES TOGETHER.
FAIRY GODFATHER
2/6

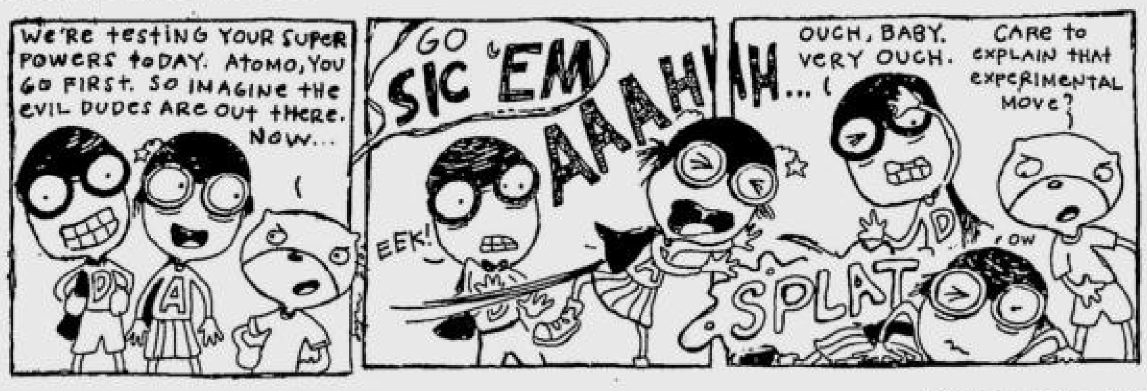
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DAHIL SA INTERNATIONAL FIRM NA YUN...
GUMANDA ANG IMAGE NATIN
OO...
PATI ANG MGA BUSINESSMEN NA GUMASTOS SA PR FIRM NA YUN... GAGANDA ANG IMAGE NILA SA'YO

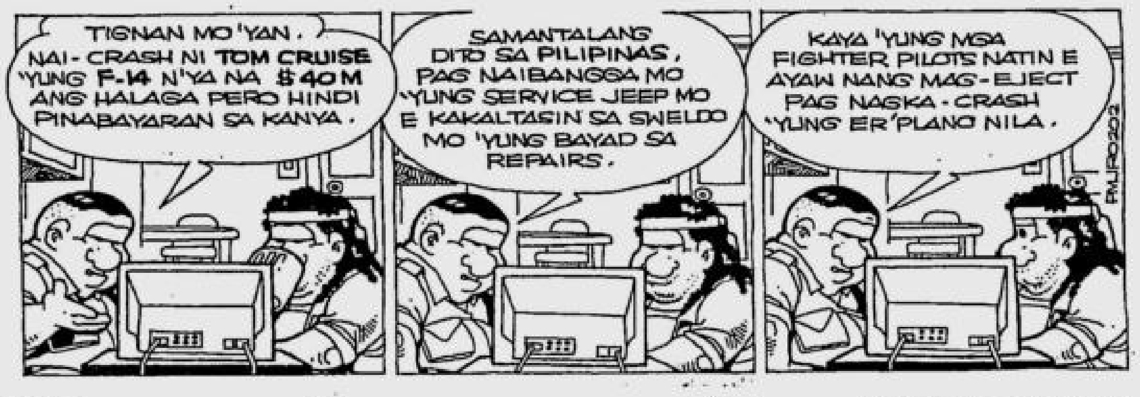
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


We're testing your super powers today. Atomo, you go first. So imagine the evil dudes are out there. Now...
GO SIC 'EM
AAAHHHH...
EEK!
SPLAT
OUCH, BABY. VERY OUCH.
Care to explain that experimental move?
OW

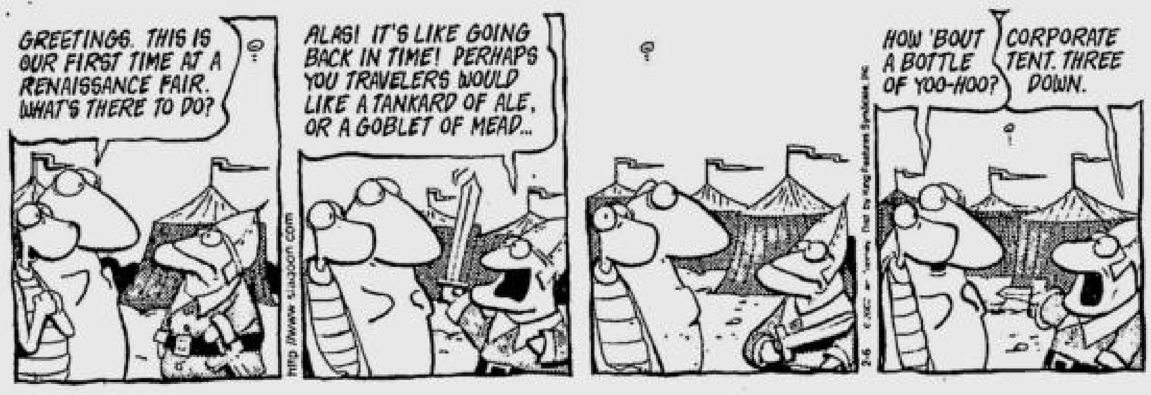
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TIGNAN MO 'YAN. NAI-CRASH NI TOM CRUISE 'YUNG F-14 N'YA NA $40M ANG HALAGA PERO HINDI PINABAYARAN SA KANYA.
SAMANTALANG DITO SA PILIPINAS, PAG NAIBANGGA MO 'YUNG SERVICE JEEP MO E KAKALTASIN SA SWELDO MO 'YUNG BAYAD SA REPAIRS.
KAYA 'YUNG MGA FIGHTER PILOTS NATIN E AYAW NANG MAG-EJECT PAG NAGKA-CRASH 'YUNG ER'PLANO NILA.

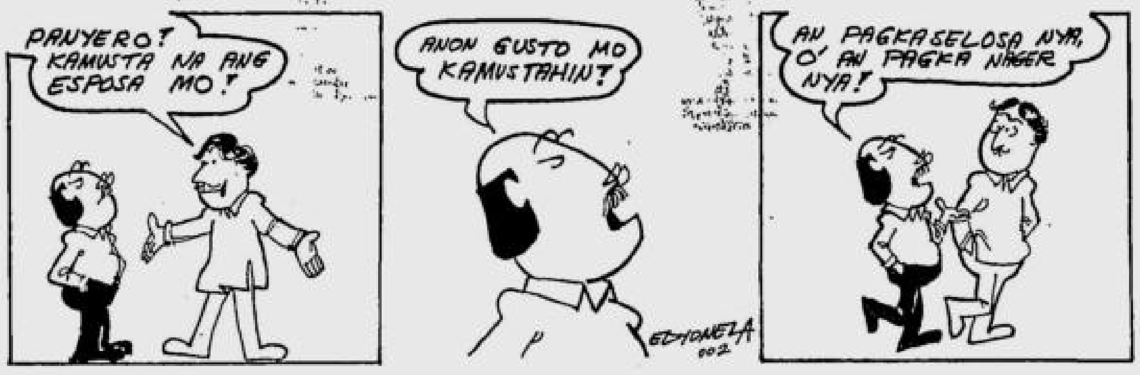
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


GREETINGS. THIS IS OUR FIRST TIME AT A RENAISSANCE FAIR. WHAT'S THERE TO DO?
ALAS! IT'S LIKE GOING BACK IN TIME! PERHAPS YOU TRAVELERS WOULD LIKE A TANKARD OF ALE, OR A GOBLET OF MEAD...
HOW 'BOUT A BOTTLE OF YOO-HOO?
CORPORATE TENT. THREE DOWN.

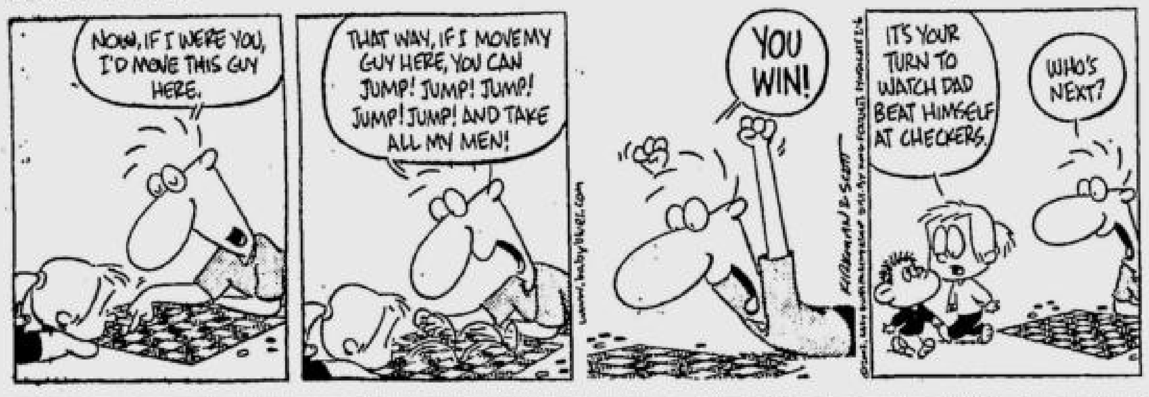
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


PANYERO! KAMUSTA NA ANG ESPOSA MO!
ANON GUSTO MO KAMUSTAHIN?
AN PAGKASELOSA NYA, O' AN PAGKA NAGER NYA!

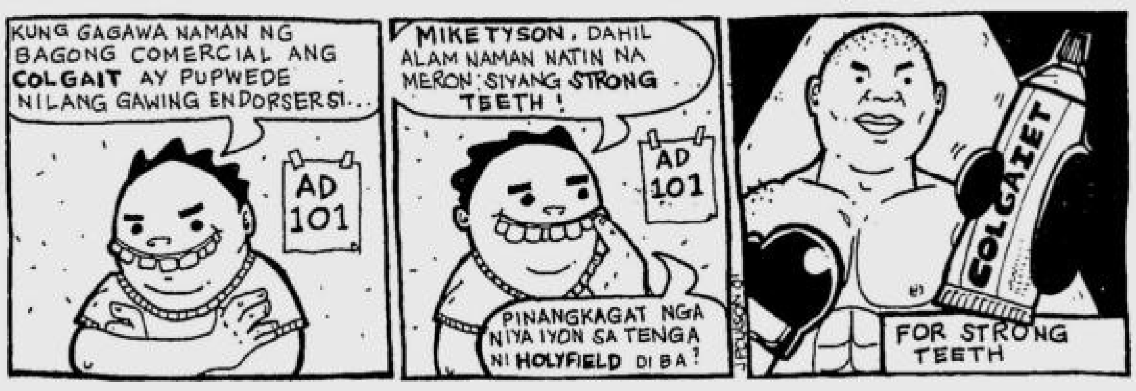
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


NOW, IF I WERE YOU, I'D MOVE THIS GUY HERE.
THAT WAY, IF I MOVE MY GUY HERE, YOU CAN JUMP! JUMP! JUMP! JUMP! JUMP! AND TAKE ALL MY MEN!
YOU WIN!
IT'S YOUR TURN TO WATCH DAD BEAT HIMSELF AT CHECKERS.
WHO'S NEXT?

GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


KUNG GAGAWA NAMAN NG BAGONG COMERCIAL ANG COLGAIT AY PUPWEDE NILANG GAWING ENDORSERS!...
AD 101
MIKE TYSON. DAHIL ALAM NAMAN NATIN NA MERON SIYANG STRONG TEETH!
AD 101
PINANGKAGAT NGA NIYA IYON SA TENGA NI HOLYFIELD DI BA?
COLGAIET
FOR STRONG TEETH

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ronald Reagan, Tom Brokaw, Babe Ruth, Natalie Cole

Happy Birthday: Your home will be important to you this year, and you will do whatever is necessary to keep the peace. You can help older relatives with their important personal or financial papers resulting in rewards that you can't even imagine. Your strong willpower should help you accomplish all you set out to do. Your numbers are 12, 15, 17, 22, 26, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your interest in learning and traveling will lead to adventure. You will be eager to communicate with people who can offer you a new point of view.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't let disagreements escalate into legal battles. Lay low for now and focus on yourself and your own accomplishments.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will be in a fickle but romantic mood. Don't get caught in the middle of an argument that doesn't involve you. Someone you care about may not live up to his or her potential.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Put your energy into doing the best job possible. You will have an opportunity to move into a better position if you go the extra mile.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You will be in a creative frame of mind. Let your imagination wander and you should be able to come up with some insightful and fruitful ideas.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Keep your thoughts to yourself or better still avoid spending too much time at home. Problems with domestic products or services can be expected.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You should consider going somewhere that will bring you pleasure. Getting out with friends will do you a world of good. Something interesting will come in the mail or via courier today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will lose if you get involved in joint financial ventures. This is not the day to get all hyped up about some crazy scheme that isn't likely to fly.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): If you don't talk about your personal concerns, you may find yourself left out in the cold. Partnerships will suffer if you aren't open and honest about your intentions.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You may get drawn into a secret intrigue. The people you work for may be doing something behind your back. Be careful not to divulge what you know.

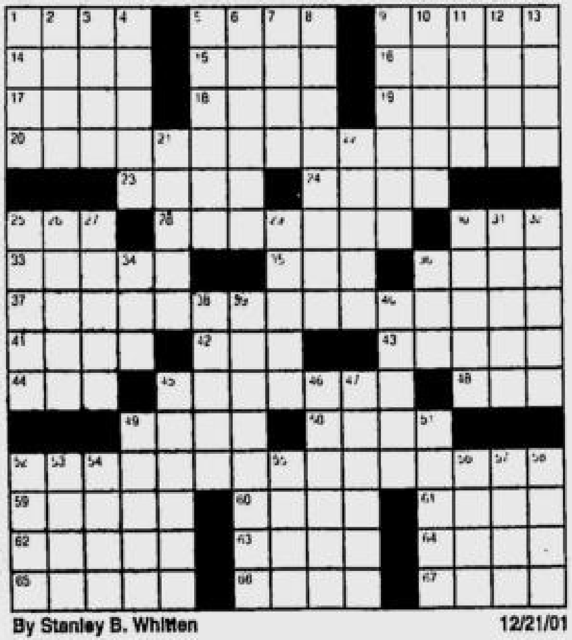
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Group activities will enable you to meet new friends and establish contact with interesting people. Your unusual interests will attract intellectual individuals.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't overreact. Things aren't as they appear. Act compassionately and affectionately toward others and focus on holding relationships together, not tearing them apart.

Birthday Baby: You are definitely not a follower. You are not concerned with being a leader; you just want to do your own thing. You're inquisitive, challenging and competitive by nature.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

12/21/01

ACROSS
1 Exchange
5 Floor pads
9 Less cluttered
14 Greet
15 Chills and fever
16 Alpaca cousin
17 Complexion woe
18 Withered
19 Column type
20 Clause in 37A, perhaps
23 Corn units
24 Record
25 Run smoothly?
28 Peaks
30 Baden-Baden or Bath
33 Sidestep
35 Cassowary relative
36 Bungle
37 Life or health benefits contract
41 Surprise attack
42 Mythical bird of prey
43 Smackers
44 NYSE watchdog
45 Acquire by trickery
48 Last letter of words?
49 Impertinence
50 Speak roughly
52 Clause in 37A, perhaps
59 Singer Mann
60 Jot
61 By mouth
62 Sully
63 Step up
64 Medicinal tablet
65 Blows one's horn
66 Welles role
67 Vendor's aim

DOWN
1 Herring's kin
2 City on the Brazos River
3 Indigenous people of Japan
4 USNA freshman
5 Capital of Lesotho
6 Elderly discrimination
7 Change direction
8 Planting occasion
9 Non-rigid airships
10 Unchallenged
11 Rajah's wife
12 Give off
13 Slightly blue
21 Kind of beam
22 Devour
25 Will's names
26 Arm bones
27 Melodies
29 Mohammed's birthplace
30 Section of a pizza
31 Hockey disks
32 Yawning gulf
34 Failure
36 Common viral infection
38 Get up
39 Like Teflon
40 Very overweight
45 Pretenders
46 Neighbor of New London
47 A washing
49 Move deceptively
51 Buttresses
52 Lively party
53 Ritzy wheels
54 Last word?
55 Soft drink
56 Number from an opera
57 Effrontery
58 Model Macpherson

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	R	E	A	■	T	S	A	R	■	B	U	B	B	A
M	I	L	O	■	H	E	B	E	■	A	T	R	I	P
E	M	B	R	R	A	C	E	S	■	T	A	R	E	S
N	E	A	T	E	N	■	L	A	T	H	■	E	R	E
■	■	■	A	G	A	R	■	W	I	T	L	E	S	S
W	E	B	S	I	T	E	S	■	S	U	E	Z	■	■
E	A	R	■	S	O	L	A	R	■	B	E	E	P	S
A	C	R	E	■	S	A	L	A	D	■	S	W	A	P
R	H	E	A	S	■	X	E	N	I	A	■	A	L	A
■	■	W	R	A	P	■	M	I	S	L	A	Y	E	R
S	M	E	L	T	E	R	■	S	A	G	S	■	■	■
A	I	R	■	I	T	E	M	■	R	E	W	A	S	H
D	E	I	C	E	■	N	E	B	R	R	A	S	K	A
I	N	E	P	T	■	A	S	I	A	■	R	E	I	N
E	S	S	A	Y	■	L	A	D	Y	■	M	A	D	D

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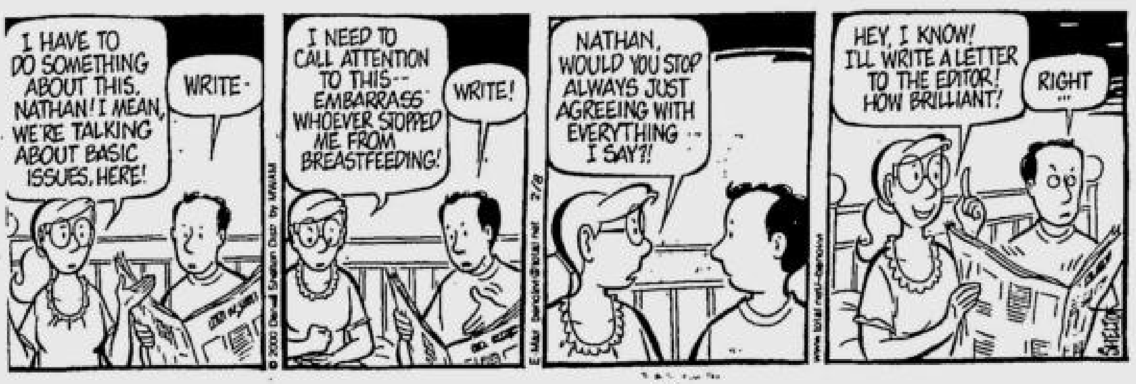
12/21/01

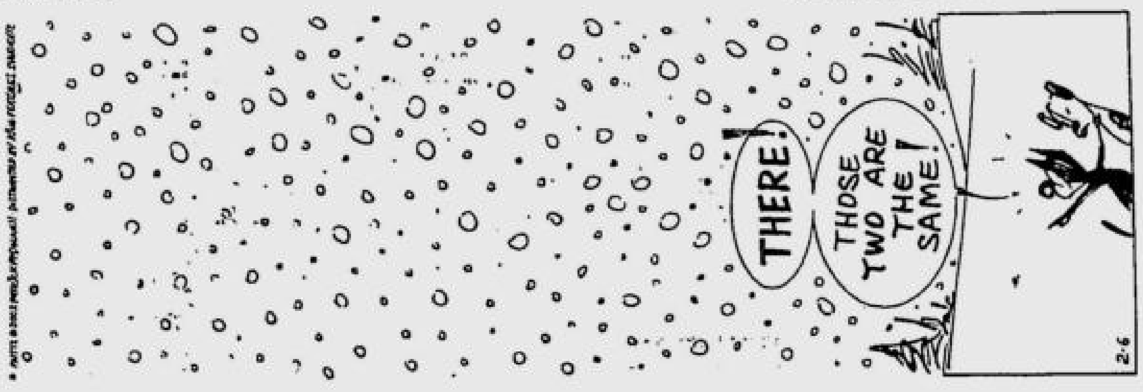
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS, NATHAN! I MEAN, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT BASIC ISSUES, HERE!
WRITE.
I NEED TO CALL ATTENTION TO THIS-- EMBARRASS WHOEVER STOPPED ME FROM BREASTFEEDING!
WRITE!
NATHAN, WOULD YOU STOP ALWAYS JUST AGREEING WITH EVERYTHING I SAY?!
HEY, I KNOW! I'LL WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR! HOW BRILLIANT!
RIGHT ...

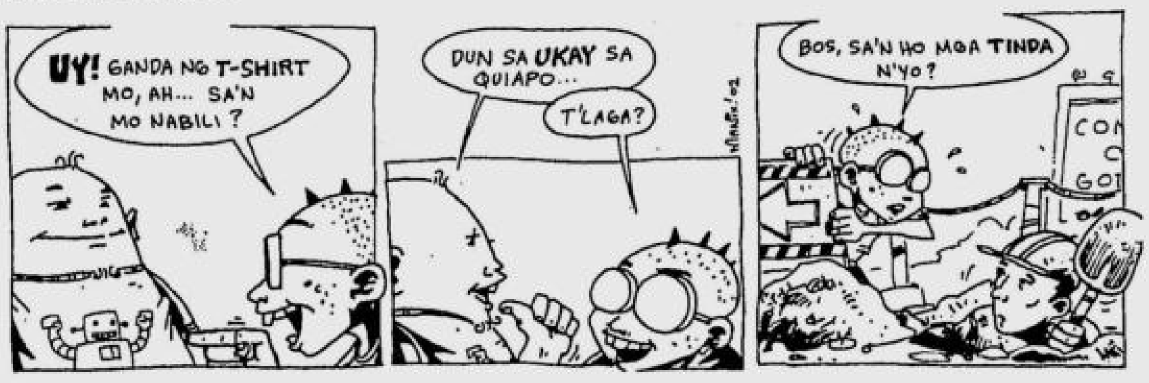
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THERE!
THOSE TWO ARE THE SAME!
2-6

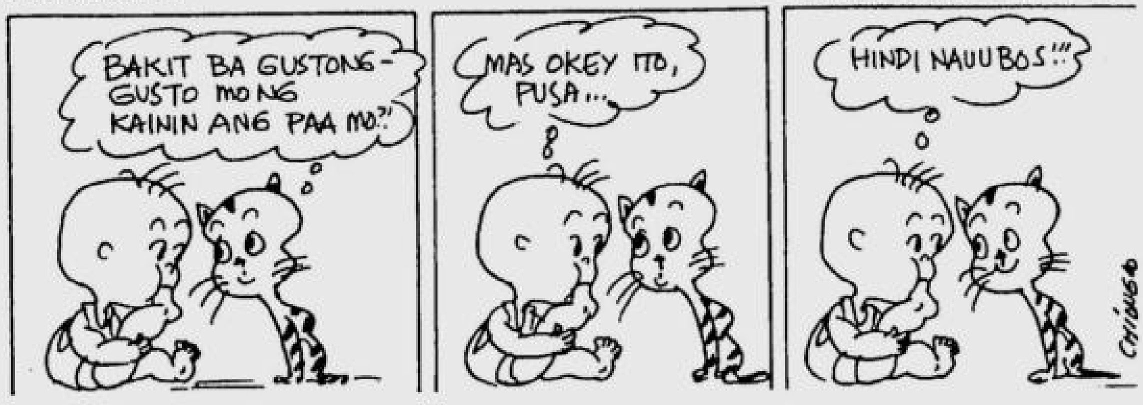
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY! GANDA NG T-SHIRT MO, AH... SA'N MO NABILI?
DUN SA UKAY SA QUIAPO...
T'LAGA?
BOS, SA'N HO MGA TINDA N'YO?

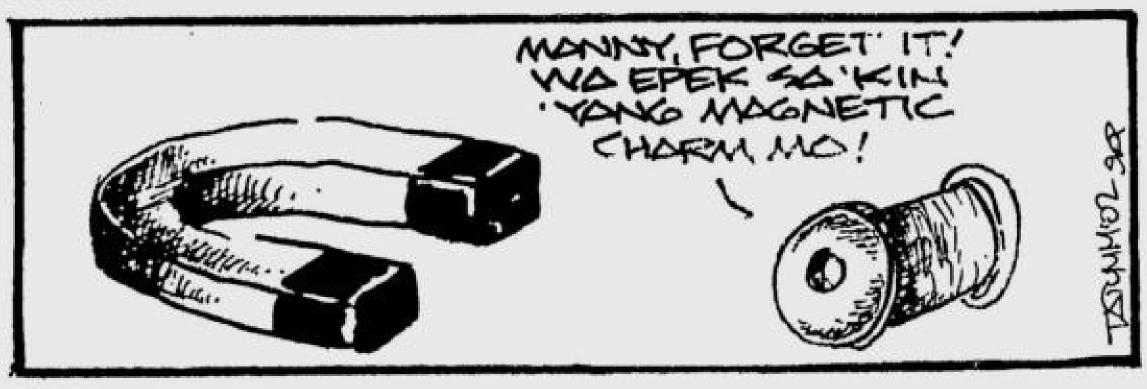
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BAKIT BA GUSTONG-GUSTO MONG KAININ ANG PAA MO?!
MAS OKEY ITO, PUSA...
HINDI NAUUBOS!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


MANNY, FORGET IT! WA EPEK SA'KIN 'YANG MAGNETIC CHARM MO!

Singapore's study grant now open for application

ACHIEVE Education Facilitation Services, a partner of Forthright Ventures (Singapore), is now accepting applications for July at Lasalle-SIA College of the Arts, South-East Asia's foremost creative arts training institution. Courses offered at Lasalle-SIA's Faculty of Visual Arts and Faculty of Performing Arts are communication design, fashion design or interior design. Fine arts courses include painting, printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, glass and architectural glass, jewelry and metalsmithing and arts management. Multimedia arts offers interactive art, video art and animation art. There are also full-time courses in drama, dance and music.

The institution has links with prestigious international universities that will allow students to take their undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Singapore with the degrees conferred by international universities including RMIT University, Griffith University and the University of Central England.

All successful applicants will be offered tuition grants. Upon completion of the program, the grantee will work in Singapore for three years. Scholarships and other bursaries are also available.

To qualify for the program, the applicant must at least be a graduating high school student, has interest in the arts and good academic performance. All applications must be submitted to Achieve Education. Deadline for submission of applications is on Feb. 15. Lasalle-SIA will conduct the tests and interviews in Manila on Feb. 23. Call Achieve Education at (632) 713-9916, (0917) 918-0126 or e-mail consults@info.com.ph. Direct inquiries to Lasalle-SIA may be made by e-mail at enquiries@lasallesia.edu.sg or the Student Services Department at (65) 344-4300. Visit its website at www.lasallesia.edu.sg. Alternatively, inquiries may be sent to Forthright Ventures at djamila@singnet.com.sg.

For reference, call Abigail A. Deado, program manager, at 713-9916 or (0917) 918-0126.

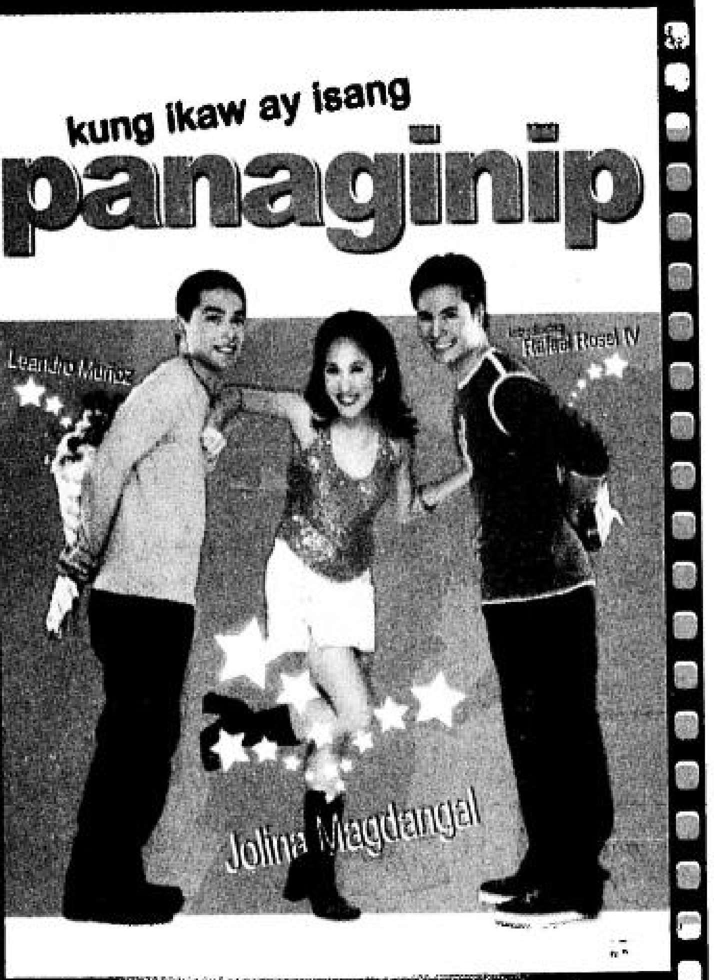
Workshop for librarians

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Librarians and Information Specialists Inc. will conduct a three-day seminar-workshop, "Strategic Collection Management and Information Access," on Feb. 14-16 at the Safari Lodge, 191 Leonard Wood Road, Baguio City.

The objectives of this seminar-workshop are: to apply new techniques for an efficient database management of information documents; to encourage the preservation and archiving of information in digital format; to provide participants with the necessary indexing and cataloging skill as tool to organize library collection; and to encourage the application of IT innovation to restore and retrieve in a timely manner the desired information.

Call Lyn at 724-1994, Lily at 929-2180, Lito at 839-1450, Medy at 897-8808 local 329, Joven at 527-9672 and Beth at 932-1295.

Now Showing Dito Lang Sa TALK 'N TEXT Cellphone Mo!



Logos

KPJOLINA1L KPPANAGINIPL KPJOLINANRAFAELL
KPJOLINASTARSL KPJOLINAL KPJOLINASTARL
KPLEANDROL KPRAFAELL KPTHREESOMEL

OPERATOR LOGOS:
To get the list of keywords, key in LOGO KP and send to 239.
To download, key in LOGO <keyword> and send to 239.
Ex: LOGO KPJOLINA1L

Picture Messages

KPJOLINA KPJOLINACUTE KPJOLINAFACE
KPJOLINASTARS KPJOLINAHEART KPJOLINALUV
KPJOLINASTAR KPLEANDRO KPLEANDRO1

PICTURE MESSAGES:
To get the list of keywords, key in PIC KP and send to 239.
To download, key in PIC <keyword> and send to 239.
Ex: PIC KPJOLINA

Games & Ringtone

Soul Mates Ba Kayo?
If you want to make sure, key in PLAY KP. You will be sent questions. Sagutin ito by keying in your choice <1,2,3>. Then, press SEND.

Can You Be More Than Friends?
To find out, key in PLAY KP2. You will be sent questions. Sagutin ito by keying in your choice <1,2,3>. Then, press SEND.

Ready Ka Na Ba To Take Your Relationship to the Next Level?
In-love ka ba talaga o hanggang magkaibigan lang kayo? Para malaman mo, key in PLAY KP3. You will be sent questions. Sagutin ito by keying in your choice <1,2,3,4>. Then, press SEND.

Ringtone
Key in TONE KP and send to 239.

Logos, picture messages and ringtone available on selected handsets
To receive more information on the commands, key in HELP <COMMANDS> and send to 239
Subscribers will be charged P2.50 per message sent
Download requests will be charged as follows:
Help and other regular commands – P2.50;
Logos, ringtone, picture messages and screensavers – P12.00;
Game – P2.50

Regular showing starts January 30, 2002

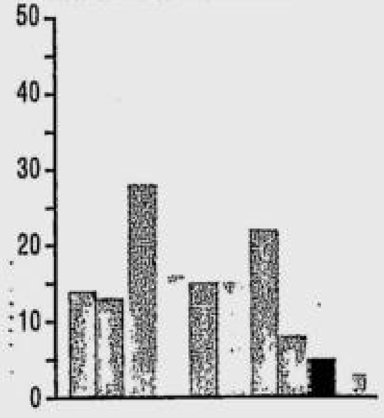
Powered by: Information Gateway
Star Cinema
WRR 101.9
the Movie Club
TALK 'N TEXT
POWERED BY THE SMART NETWORK

SHOPWISE
we value your time
time spent with us is time well-spent!

Libis wisens up on the 7th of February

SHOPWISE
LIBIS is at 150 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Bagumbayan, Quezon City

Between the dumper and the dumpee



HOW THEY GET OVER FAILED RELATIONSHIPS

VARIABLES:

Eat a lot	...14
Find someone else	...13
Go out with friends	...28
Get a makeover	...11
Spend time with family	...10
Go shopping	...10
Spend time alone	...22
Go to Church	...8
Self-pity	...5
Listen to music	...3

From page E1

Seems like breaking up has instilled a bit of wisdom in the youth. Nineteen-year-old Michael said, "We realize someone's importance when they are already in somebody else's arms."

Breakdown, 17, said, "People wear masks after breakups, while we nurse our wounds. These masks of pretension tell other people that we're okay and that we'll survive."

The respondents left messages of encouragement to their peers. "Be fair to yourself," said 20-year-old Ellson.

Seventeen-year-old Snoopydoopeydoops added, "Don't cry for someone who doesn't deserve your tears." Then again, who does?

Mark, 16, said, "There's no use holding on to someone who's squirming to get away."

"Don't love your partner too much too hard. Learn to keep a little for yourself," 18-year-old Jiorg said.

One resounding message is—never lose hope. The future holds brighter things for you and your love life. Just like Charms, 18, wrote, "There is always someone better than your ex."

You couldn't help but notice the tone of cynicism in the responses. Eighteen-year-old Jaypee Garcia of UST said, "The moment a relationship starts, it's beginning to end." And this cynicism may also be the reason 56 percent of the respondents are not in relationships right now. The other 44 percent are currently in attached bliss.

E-mail the author at cookiedoughjunkie@yahoo.com

When you were dumped, was revenge ever on your mind?

46% said yes

54% said no

How hard is it for you to deal with a breakup?

24% said it's easy

56% said it's something they can handle

20% find it difficult

Are you in a relationship right now?

44% said yes

56% said no

Cheesecake, etc.
Délifrance
Starbucks Coffee
Café Breton French Crepes & Fine Coffee
UCC Coffee Vienna Café
Cinnabon
The Cafe Mediterranean Flavors of the Sun
Pagliacci
Casa Armas Tapas Bar y Restaurante
Yaku Japanese Grill
Mini Shabu-Shabu

now open

— THE —
PODIUM
C'est la vie

18 adb avenue, ortigas center

She's in love with her first cousin

Carlos Garchitorena & September Mabino

DEAR Sep and Caloy,

I have a really big problem and it has pushed me into relocating here in Manila just to try to forget it. I am in love with my first cousin and I think he loves me too in the same way. I know that it is improper but I honestly love him. He has told me that the guy I'd marry in the future would be a lucky man, but it is him I want to marry.

What's worse is that I found out that my parents are also first cousins. They've separated now and I only learned of it recently. In the beginning, I was really mad at them and embarrassed about their blood relationship but now that I am experiencing the same thing, I have understood how they must have felt when they were young.

Somehow, they must have sensed what's going on between me and my cousin, that we have a mutual understanding, and my parents have tried to separate us. That's why I am in Manila. I volunteered to leave home because I couldn't take it anymore. I couldn't forget my cousin even here, though, and I am honestly thinking of arranging a secret marriage between us. I know this is wrong. I need a lot of help to get me out of this mindset. Please tell me what to do so I can set things right and forget about him.

LESLIE

I am not one to immediately believe that some big mistakes run in the blood but it does pay to know your history to understand what were the mistakes that have been done before in order to know how to avoid them.

What happened to your parents—their separation, I mean—may not happen to you and your cousin if ever you decide to push through with this secret marriage. But—just imagine how you felt upon knowing that your parents are first cousins. I don't think you would want your future children to feel embarrassed and angry at you. And by marrying your cousin, you'd only become one of the many proofs of "Like mother, like daughter," in the derogatory sense of the saying.

Voluntarily putting distance between him and yourself is a good first step. Now, you only need to distract yourself with things that interest you, like studies or hobbies or even a new guy, whatever suits you. It wouldn't be easy; you'd have to exert a lot of effort and if need be, ask help from your friends to keep you from thinking about your cousin. In due time, I hope, you'd be able to get over what you're feeling for him.

SEP

It is a many splendored thing, love. It is like oxygen. All you need is love. It makes you want to run about in the streets and dance as if for the first time, love. It makes your voice ring and your heart sing. You get tired but your energy is inexhaustible for as long as you feel love.

Love has no first name, nor a last name, nor a middle name. Love means respect. It is not jealous, nor bitter, nor does it hide in shame. Love is not adoration, nor fanciful, though it can be. But love is deep, maybe even unreachable in our comprehension, or in my lifetime. When storybooks about princes and princesses end in "happy ever after," love is hardly mentioned but it is symbolized gaudily like a gold and neon wedding.

CARLOS